DISCOURSES

of

MAULANA MASEEULLAH KHAN SAHIB (RA)

Compiled by:

Dr. Ismaiel Mangera

ALTAF & SONS

P.O. BOX No. 5882, KARACHI - 74000, PAKISTAN
Fax : (92) 21 - 32512774 E-mail : altaf123@hotmail.com

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CONTENT

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Chapter No.: 1

1. FOREWORD

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A number of people have felt that there is a great need for these discourses to be available to the English reader. This humble servant has made an attempt at translating one such discourse from the Urdu. InshaAllah, attempts will be made with other discourses as well. The phrase that comes to mind is, "fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

The dictionary meanings of "dost" is "friend; lover". Which is applicable? Thinking about it, both are applicable.
In a lifetime of service to the Ummat, Hadhratjee has made untold friends In the Indo-Pak subcontinent as well as in other parts of the world. The word "friend" would apply here.

In the special terminology of the Sufi, "dost" is that person who is treading the Path of Sulook. Being in love with Allah Taala, this person has sought out the Real

Lovers of Allah Ta'ala, the Auliya-Allah, to get closer to the Loved One. In this sense, the meaning of "lover" is applicable.

Hadhratjee once pointed out an interesting fact: Every Muslim has love for Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul (Sallallahu alaihi wa Sallam), this love coming to the fore whenever an attack is made on the Deen. In this sense, the title "Dosto ke liye..." for these discourses, is appropriate for the whole Ummat.

(Not related to the title, may I slip in a word of thanks and say "jazakallah" to those friends who prompted, encouraged and assisted in this publication.)
Dr.Ismaiel Mangera.

2. INTRODUCTION

Hadhrat Maulana Maseehullah Khan Saheb (barakatohum) needs no introduction. Hadhratjee, as most people have come to call him, is the founder of the Darul-Ulum in Jalalabad, U.P., India. Many are the Ulema who have graduated from his Darul-Ulum, from India as well as different parts of the world. However, it is as a Sheikh of Tariqat in the field of Tasawwuf that Hadhratjee has benefited the Ummat to an unfathomable extent.

In Jalalabad, surrounding the courtyard of the Madressah Masjid, are some sixteen rooms. Originally built for casual visitors, over the years this area has come to be known as the "Khanqa". - a residence for those involved in their self - rectification. An important part of the programme of self-rectification is attendance at the majlis. It is thus, essential to understand what a majlis is. The word "majlis" is translated as "assembly/committee". In our context it refers to the gathering which a Sheikh

arranges and addresses: "Majlis" refers to the gathering and also to the discourse delivered. A Sheikh will have three types of majalis (pl. of majlis) - majlise-am, which is for the general body of Muslims; majlise-khas, which is for the benefit of a selected group; majlise-akhas, which is attended by a few selected, specially privileged elite'. Those in the Khanqa are expected to attend the majlise-am and the majlise-khas.

(The discourse that follows is a translation of a majlise-khas).

THE SUBJECT OF A MAJLIS

At a waiz (lecture) a specific subject is taken and discussed in detail. A majlis differs in that no specific subject is chosen. The Sheikh speaks "off the cuff" and the topics will cover a wide spectrum. The main aim is islah - the improvement of those that are attending. The discourse will vary from day to day, in subject matter as well as level of discussion. (The titles of the majalis have been chosen by me and reflect the general theme only.)

It is not unusual to hear topics discussed so simply that even non-Muslims may understand. On the other hand, with the presence of doctors, lawyers, engineers, university professors, students and Ulema, the level of talk can be so elevated that not all those attending will understand what is being said.

The rule that applies is: digest and assimilate what you do understand, and leave the rest till later:

Topics discussed are not purely "theological". Islam covers every aspect of life; and every aspect of living has to be according to the Shariat. Therefore, guidance from the Sheikh is on any and every aspect of life as it affects the Muslim.

METHOD.

Although the Sheikh speaks "off the cuff', each sentence is full of meaning, and completely relevant. The Sheikh will encourage, he will guide, he will correct - through qissas, through reason - quoting Quran and Hadith, never by taking the names of those present. For maximum benefit, each Individual present must have the attitude that the Sheikh is addressing him personally.

Hadhratjee aims to remove apathy, to provoke thought and contemplation. An appeal is made to the individual's reason and logic. He is encouraged to adopt those thought processes that will cause him to become self-motivated. Only when the individual allows the lid of stifling apathy to be removed will he be able to soar into those realms which are so fascinating as to have caused Kings to give up their wordly Kingdoms!!

WHO WILL BENEFIT?

Two groups of people will definitely benefit:

In the FIRST GROUP are those who have faith and confidence in the speaker. They know that their Sheikh is a Sheikh-e-Kamil and will speak only what is Haq. They realise that application of his advice will definitely cause an improvement in themselves.

In the SECOND GROUP are those who attend with open minds. They have no preconceived ideas, nor prejudices, but will listen and think over what is said, and accept what is logical and right, what is Haq.

A THIRD GROUP will not benefit at all. In this group are those who listen to criticize, those who are prejudiced and will rot allow what is being presented to change their attitude.

PREPARATION

The basic preparation is to open one's mind and ones heart for the Haq to enter. Any one majlis will have sufficient material to benefit anybody irrespective of who he is. Obviously, the more familiar one is with the subjects discussed, the greater the benefit. Kitabs recommended are: "Good Character", Shariat and Tasawwuf", and "Hayaatul Muslimeen"*. For maximum benefit these kitabs have to be read at least three times. This applies to the majalis as well. Those who understand Urdu, will benefit more by reading the latter two kitabs in the original Urdu. At this point let me add that the translation of the majlis that follows is not an exact word for word translation. A minimal amount of editing has taken place to ensure a reading style that is smooth. Obviously, the spoken word is more effective, more charming and more vibrant than the written word. Apologies for not being able to get these features across. Not to break the beauty of these discourses completely, a maximum of relevant original terms have been maintained instead of using the English equivalents. Those familiar with the subject will appreciate this fact. Those not familiar are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these words to enjoy these discourses to the fullest extent. A glossary has also been included.

Finally...

...may Allah Ta'ala give you and me the tawfiq to make amal on these teachings

Dr.Ismaiel Mangera.

3. TARTIB OF SULOOK

We have been sent here, into this world, to be in business (tijarat) for the Akhirat. Whatever activity we are involved in here falls in the category of tijarat for the Akhirat.

The supporting ayet of the Qur'an is:

"And I have not created the Jinn and Mankind but that they should worship Me". (Surah 51, Ayet 56)

It is clear that Allah Ta'ala has brought us into this world for the sole purpose of making His ibadat, and for no other purpose whatsoever! It follows that our lifestyles - all aspects of our daily lives - are subordinate to, and related to, the Akhirat.

It then follows that the laws and rules relating to the Akhirat automatically apply to our lives here, and WHEN OUR LIVING OR LIFESTYLE IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THESE RULES, OUR WHOLE EXISTENCE IS NOW IBADAT.

Now, we have a stomach, which is housed in a physical body. The stomach requires food and the body requires clothing and shelter. The means for attaining these requirements are various - agriculture, industry, commerce, professional

services, employment, etc. To fulfill our bodily needs, these worldly activities are necessary.

There appears to be a paradox: on the one hand we have been made dependent on these worldly activities, and, on the other hand, the command given to us Is that our sole activity should be ibadat. The explanation Is that fulfilling our bodily needs for the purpose of ibadat makes the means adopted also ibadat.

This means that the activities listed above - agriculture, industry, etc. will consequently be counted as ibadat.

As an individual, what does all this mean to you? Involvement in any enterprise, whether in one's individual capacity or whether in partnership with others, means interaction with others. Associating with others becomes unavoidable. Different individuals have different temperaments. To be able to deal with different personalities, to be able to avoid friction with people of different temperaments, the most Important factor is one's personality.

In order to cope with various situations a good character is essential - a personality that will know how to respond to different conditions in the correct manner.

It should not happen that flaws in one's character disrupt the smooth running of one's affairs. It is obvious that greed and avarice, or pride and arrogance, will result in eventual disunity - such qualities are bound to cause friction and disharmony.

Having understood the importance of good morals (i.e. a good character) in our worldly activities involving association with others, we can now proceed further:

The ibadat that one is involved in tails into two categories:

i) mutaallaq bil zahir (connected with the external e.g. namaz, roza, etc.)

ii) muta'allaq bil batin (connected with the internal, with one's character). We are accountable for both.

Of the two, ibadat bil batin, first, has to be established before ibadat bil zahir. By doing this one will attain tranquility, steadfastness and permanence in one's ibadat bil zahir, and also gushu and guzu.

WHAT IS GUSHU?

Gushu is, to avoid bringing thoughts of anything except Allah Taala into ones heart deliberately during ones ibadat. Note the emphasis on the word deliberately (igtiari). Those thoughts that are gair-igtiari (come involuntarily) are of no consequence.

It is not only in namaz that gushu is essential, but the concept of gushu is that at all times the heart should be free of gairullah, that thoughts not connected with Allah Taala should not be brought to mind deliberately.

This is the original occupation of the heart - Huzure Haq: to be aware of the Presence of Allah Ta'ala at all times.

Many still have the wrong concept that gushu is essential only in namaz. Added to this is the misconception that only namaz is ibadat.

However, the Momin, that person imbued with Iman, bears the responsibility for performing all Ibadat. As explained already, our sole purpose In this world is the ibadat of Allah Taala.

Namaz is the zahiri ibadat of the body, but a more important ibadat is the ibadat of the heart. This batini ibadat of the heart is to have the Presence of Allah Ta'ala in the heart at all times. This is a basic, primary ibadat.

Linked with this ibadat of the heart are other forms of ibadat. It follows that all activity carried out with this primary ibadat firmly established in the heart, will all be counted as ibadat. Now there will be reality in the purpose of one's existence, namely, that we have been brought into existence for the sole purpose of the ibadat of Allah Ta'ala.
All the necessary branches and off-shoots of our lives will then be connected to ibadat, whether it is agriculture or commerce, the practice of medicine or law, teaching or lecturing, writing or publishing.

This being the case, the primary pre-requisite before undertaking these activities is attaining the necessary Ilm (knowledge). Whether one works alone or with others in a group, one has to know the Shari laws and rules related to that particular activity.

The very fact that we are Muslim, makes it compulsory for us to gain knowledge. This is a Muslim's primary duty. The knowledge that he has to seek is that of the Shar'i laws and rules. which is called llm. The attainment of llm is also ibadat. Any person who becomes a Muslim and Momin has to undertake this essential and compulsory ibadat in the first instance. Without llm - without this pre-required ibadat - no other ibadat performed will be completely correct, and any ibadat not performed correctly has no chance of being accepted!

How important is this acquisition of llm? This can be gauged from the following: On occasions of Jihad not all the Sahaba (R.A.) were permitted to proceed into battle at once. (The exception being those situations where there were general hostilities - nafeere am):

The Quranic ayet states: (Surah 9 Ayet 122)

This ayet Instructs that one jamat from amongst you (the Sahaba R.A.) should go forth in Jihad and one jamat should remain behind with Rasullullah (Sallallahu alaihi wa Sallam) for the purpose of attaining llm.
When the first jama't returns then they should be taught.

In emphasizing the importance of llm, the ayet also lays down an important principle:

Actions are of two categories: firstly, the removal of harm, and secondly, the gaining of benefit. The principle laid down is that the process of removal of harm takes priority over the gain of benefit. To avoid injury, to remove those things which are harmful, to save oneself from injurious items, comes first. Then only should one turn to what is beneficial.

In other words, firstly remove the bad things from oneself, those things which are filthy and offensive. Then adorn oneself with good. Here is an illustration: If you wish to fill an empty hauz (pond) with clean water, you will first make sure that it contains no filth, nothing malodorous. You will make sure that it has no holes nor defects in it, any fault that will cause the water to leak away.
You will take care to clean the hauz properly, repair the cracks, and then only will

you fill it with clean water.
This is a common-sense method, an instinctive, natural way of going about the work.

When it comes to our Deeni affairs, the same method applies. When preparing for ibadat, one will have to look closely at oneself: are there re defects within, no such offensive matters that will prevent good from entering? If not, are there no such factors that will cause 1he good that has entered from seeping away?

Obstructing factors are of two types: firstly, those 1hat impede good from entering; and secondly, those that dissipate the good already present.

What are these obstructive factors? In one's batin these are the Akhlaqe razilah, also called Akhlaqe zamimah - the debasing qualities in a character. These debasing qualities are ingrained. The aim is to control and discipline them in such a way as to avoid their wrong usage.
(Surah 91 Ayet 8)

The Akhlaqe razilah are obstructing factors, factors that prevent good from coming into a person.

These factors have to be removed first, then only can there be any consistency in the good one is aiming at. What is "good"? It is ibadat.
The aim is to establish zahiri a'mal. The method is that which has been outlined already.

At this point an important axiom has to be borne in mind. This is: that person whose zahir only is good, and his batin is bad, is better than that person whose batin is good and his zahir is bad. This is from the Shariat point of view. This will be explained.

In other words, that person who carries out the external commands of the Shariat only, and his internal character is defective, is better than that person whose character appears to be excellent, but he does not carry out the external orders of the Shariat.

The reason that the first person is considered to be better is that, at least, he has respect for the Orders of Allah Ta'ala. This awe and respect that motivates him make all the difference!

Secondly, baking deeper, that person whose character appears to be excellent but does not carry out the zahiri orders of the Shariat, is, in actual fact, rotten in his batin as well.

This point requires further elucidation:

A bad character is recognized as such even by the kafir. Ask any kafir about takabbur, about hirs and tama', about gussah, about hiqd and keenah, and he will also tell you that these are bad qualities to have in one's character. The differentiation from a kafir will not show except in one's zahiri activities.

The question arises: What is the difference in the good character of a kafir and a Mo'min, if both appear to have a good character? The difference is that the kafirs good character has been attained through simple intellectual reasoning. What his

reason has told him is bad, he has eliminated. The Momin, on the other hand, has gone through a process of tazkiyah of his nafs and ended with a good character. The motivation in his case has been nisbat m'allah - a special bond with Allah Ta'ala. The Mo'min has khauf of Allah Ta'ala, a quality conspicuously absent in the kafir.

The kafir with a "good" character will not get into a rage because his intellect and reason tell him it is bad. The Mo'min differs in that his motivation is the firm belief that Allah Ta'ala is Hazir- Nazir (Omnipresent and Omniscient). To this Momin this concept is not just theoretical but a tangible bond affecting his behaviour.

Another point: a persons reasoning can be faulty. Any conclusions arrived at purely from reason - as is the method adopted by the kafir -cannot be taken as valid. Only if there is a Shariat basis for that conclusion will it be valid.
This applies to character as well. A character that is termed "good" purely on reason is not necessarily good. Only that character can be labelled "good" where the Momin has cleansed himself of the akhlaqe razilah, based on nisbat mallah, which means that his behaviour will be according to the Shariat.

This answers the question that arose after stating the important rule that that person whose zahir is good but not his batin, is better than that person whose batin appears to be good but not his zahir.
(Obviously, a person whose zahir and batin are both good is better than both.)

When it is said that the zahir is good, it means that his zahir is according to the Shariat as far as ibadat Is concerned, as far as muasharat is concerned, as far as

mu'amulat is concerned, even though he may have takabbur (which only Allah Taala can gauge).

On the other hand, the statement that a person has no takabbur, but his zahir is bad, is contradictory. In truth, if a person had no takabbur then this would automatically manifest in his zahir being good also!

Take an example:
Somebody comes from behind and gives this person a thump on his back with a closed fist. This person ignores the thump, carries on with what he is doing, and does not even glance back to see who hit him. He has no takabbur, haqiqatan.

Take somebody else. He is also similarly thumped on his back. He responds by turning round, a stern expression on his face, and angrily rebuking the person who hit him.

This reaction betrays him. His humble attitude in front of others was mere social politeness. This reaction of his shows that the absence of takabbur was only apparent, and not real - suratan, not haqiqatan.

Why did he not maintain his composure? At the time that he was thumped, his true colours showed. Why did he flare up? Why did the expression on his face show displeasure? Why did anger show and unbecoming expressions issue from his lips?

Why did he not recognise the opposite party and the occasion? Did he not see that it was his principal, his superior? Did he not recognise that his position demanded that he speak politely?

His angry reaction betrays the fact that all the akhlaqe razilah have not been completely removed.

Another example:
Somebody has personal problems. Now for someone to go around trying to get details of his problems from others, and then spread these items of gossip shows that one is still lacking. One has not yet developed that talluq mallah in ones heart that is the desired state - even though in ones zahir one may have a beard, wear a kurta and ijar, one may even be a hafiz or alim!

These are simple illustrations - illustrations to show-up takabbur and gheebat.

What is noteworthy about gheebat, is that the backbiter is continually committing sins all the time that he is involved in gheebat. Compare his situation with that person committing an act of zina (fornication): his sin lasts for the duration of the act only. Also, the evil act of zina is condemned by all. Quite rightly so, but what about gheebat because gheebat is worse that zina!
The Quran shareef is quite emphatic:
(Surah 49 Ayet 12)

"Do not spy on one another and do not back-bite..." Knowing full well the gravity of the sin of gheebat, yet you are still involved in it?!

So, firstly those internal, obstructive factors have to be cleared up. This is to be done in 1he correct and proper manner - not in terms of social politeness, but in the proper Shariat sense.

The next step is to assimilate the akhlaqe hamidah. With the akhlaqe razilah removed, the personality will now shine forth and emit grace and elegance, beauty and adornment.

It this method is NOT followed, the result is an odd mixture of the akhlaqe razilah and hamidah. Saddled with contradictory qualities, how can there be grace and elegance? There can be no adornment. The whole situation is faulty.

Let me ask a question: When is ittar applied? The obvious answer is that ittar is applied when one's clothes have been washed and cleaned, when the dust and dirt have been removed, and the sweaty smell has been cleared. When one's clothes carne back neatly ironed and pressed, then only is ittar applied. Now do you understand?

Similarly, the batin has to be cleaned. How? By an abundance of "istigfar" - which has many facets (to be detailed later). With the batin cleansed, now is the occasion for durud shareef - now will the durud shareef show its full effect.

Istigfar is analogous to cleansing and durud shareef is analogous to the application of ittar. Is there any sense in reciting durud shareef but not istigfar?

Istigfar has several aspects. Istigfar, in the context of self-rectification (islah), has a methodology. We have already mentioned the inspection of one's batin. One also has to inspect ones zahir:

From the age of puberty one became mukallaf - the responsibility of following the Shariat was laid on ones shoulder. From the age of 14 or 15 years certain a mal

became incumbent on one. Take stock. See if there are any deficiencies in these amal.

The first stage to tackle as far as one's zahiri a'mal are concerned, is namaz. The performance of namaz five times daily, became compulsory on reaching puberty. This is why children should be encouraged to perform namaz from the age of 7 years.
We are even enjoined to inflict physical punishment in this respect at the age of 10 years. So that, by the time a child reaches the age of puberty,

The performance of namaz is ingrained and natural, part of the child's tabiyet. He will not neglect his namaz.

Roza (fasting) also becomes compulsory at the age of puberty. Unlike namaz, roza is not a daily function, but is compulsory only during the month of Ramadhân annually. There is no emphasis of inculcating the habit of fasting at an early age, as is the case with namaz.

Tartib - methodology - is our main theme. Let us re-iterate this tartib. When Realisation strikes a person; when the fear and dread of Qiyamah has entered the heart; when he has become aware of a t'alluq m'allah, at this crucial time he should inspect himself and take stock of his situation: "Have I not neglected some huquq?" is the question he should be asking.

Neglected huquq will have to be compensated for. The act of taubah will wipe out sins but not neglected huquq. These have to be compensated for.

For example: A person may have committed zina. or he may have succumbed to the shameful act of drinking liquor. Both of these acts do not involve huquq. A sincere, proper taubah will cause these sins to be forgiven, and the person can forget about his misdeeds.

Not so with namaz. This involves huquq. Missed namaz is not overlooked, even after taubah. Missed namaz have to be performed. The person has to do a simple calculation. For example, he has to say to himself: "I attained puberty at the age of 15 years. I was negligent till the age of 30 years, when I became punctual. Thus, I have missed out 15 years' namaz. He now has to compensate for these years of neglect.

This is the correct method. Many people have made taubah and thereafter become regular with their namaz, but they give no thought to compensating for what they have missed. Dirt still remains. Clean-up this dirt. How? By performing qadha namaz of those missed. An easy method is to perform one qadha namaz each time one performs a regular namaz. Repeat only the fard of the missed namaz. Leave out the sunnat and nafl namaz, but include the wit r with the Esha 'qadha.

It is important to make a firm intention and resolution to repay, and to be steadfast. Death is not in our hands. Should death intervene, there is great hope that Allah Taala, the Generous, the Bountiful, will overlook those namaz still not repaid. He is fully aware of our niyet.

Yes, if one has tree time, one may perform as many qadha namaz as one wishes, and at any time of the day or night, except the three prohibited periods. These are

at the time of the rising of the sun, at the time that the sun is at its zenith, and at the time of the setting of the sun. The sooner you repay, the better.

Tackle roza similarly. Calculate the number that had been missed since puberty, whether through neglect, illness or being on a journey, etc. Start compensating for these by tasting regularly, taking into account your health and strength, the climate and environmental factors.

Zakat comes next. Calculate the amount of zakat that you were liable for since puberty. Total these amounts and start distributing according to your means.

Yes, if you are completely destitute, you have no alternative but to humble yourself completely in front of Allah Ta'ala, and tearfully plead for His Mercy and forgiveness. Also promise to distribute the missed zakat as soon as you have the means.

This brings us to Haj. If you were liable for Haj, but neglected to go, then fulfill this obligation as well. If you are very old and sickly and physically incapable of going yourself, you may send another on your behalf, sponsoring him from your wealth.

If you do not have the financial means now, although you had the necessary wealth in the past, there is no need to panic! Throw yourself in front of Allah Taala, prostrate in taubah to Him. There is hope - nay, there is certainty - that He will forgive the sincere taib.

These remarks are directed at that person in whom the khauf at Allah Ta'ala has entered, at that person who has developed talluq mallah in his heart. Indifference and apathy have lifted from his heart. He. has, placed his foot firmly on the path of Sulook. We are speaking to him.

Thus far we have dealt with the huquq that Allah Taala has on one. But what about His creation? He has also ordered us to rectify their huquq.

If you have offended anyone, go to him and ask his forgiveness. Do this in the proper manner: clasping your hands in contrition, cap in hand, ask forgiveness from your heart. If not today, tomorrow; if not tomorrow, the day after. But do as commanded.

Despite this, if the opposite party does not forgive you, do not grieve. It is said: A person, clearly in the wrong, not asking for forgiveness is a shaitaan; the opposite party not forgiving, is an ass!

We are still dealing with the tartib of islah - the proper manner of rectifying oneself. After taubah one has to remove the accumulated dirt first, eliminate contaminating factors first. Thus the need to compensate for past shortcomings.

A doctor uses the same principle in his methods. For example: a patient presents with intestinal disease. Those factors causing the disease are first eliminated, and then gamirah - an invigorating tonic - is prescribed. Only if the intestines are free of the disease-causing factors will they be capable of assimilating the strengthening agents in the tonic. (The doctor may prescribe a tonic simultaneously at his discretion, but that is a different situation).

To continue: We are dealing with the rights of the creation - huququl ibad. The rights that Allah Ta'ala has - huququllah - have already been dealt with. It has been emphasised that taubah does not cancel obligations. Past shortcomings have to be compensated for.

Huququl ibad are more important than huququllah in terms of compensation. This importance can be gauged from the following: A Momin is obligated to another person for the mere sum of 3 paisa. The Momin has neither repaid this sum, nor has he asked to be pardoned if unable to pay. On the day of Qiyamat 700 accepted namaz of the Mo'min will be given to the creditor in lieu of the unfulfilled debt of 3 paisa.

Just think! Are 3 paisa anything? On the other hand, what is the value of namaz...? Allahu Akbar!!...And 700 namaz? Allahu akbar!!...And such namaz that have been accepted...? All to be given to the creditor!!

To what extent is this haq not being deliberately transgressed these days! Houses on houses are taken over; land on land is snatched; wealth on wealth is usurped.

Just one such example is the case where the father dies. The eldest son seizes possession of the whole estate and the Shariat laws on distribution of the estate are completely ignored.

This type of thing is done by Muslims! Those having faith and belief in the Akhirat Yet, most sorrowfully, their actions show how weak that belief is! Haw deficient is that concept of Allah Taala being Hazir-Nazir.

Yes, that person whose t'alluq m'allah is such that the concept of Allah Taala being Hazir-Nazir is part of his conscious and subconscious state, will act differently. The Presence of Allah Ta'ala will be with him always. His actions will be according to the Shariat, according to the manner shown by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihi wa Sallam). Neither land nor wealth will be usurped; hOU868 will be distributed justly.

These remarks are directed at the Salek - that person who has come for his tazkiyah, for the cleansing of his batin, for the adornment of his inner self. He is the primary person one is addressing.

This is the order and structure (tartib and targib) of attaining t'alluq m'allah. This is the methodology of attaining that elevation, that status, that strengthening that is the Special Bond one aims to develop with Allah Ta'ala.

Think on it. Contemplate on it. Judge yourself on it.

We are still dealing with huququl ibad.
Gheebat has been mentioned as a sin. But there is a further point here: One has made gheebat of another person. One becomes aware that he has come to know of it. Taubah and istigfar are not sufficient. One has to ask that persons forgiveness as well.

Once the opposite party comes to know of your gheebat concerning him, the sin goes into the category of huququl ibad. If the opposite party is not aware of your gheebat, the sin of gheebat remains in the category of huququllah, in which case taubah and Istigfar are sufficient.

The Ahlullah, the Allah-wala, those who have attained the correct talluq m'allah, however, will not allow the matter 1o rest there.

Should they perchance get involved in gheebat, their taubah and istigfar is automatic. But they remain perturbed and restless, and are in a state of discomfiture until they have not asked the opposite party's pardon, even if they know that the opposite party is not aware of the gheebat!!
Nay! Even though they have not made gheebat verbally, even though they have not spoken out others' faults, but have deliberately brought the faults of others into their hearts, they have breached their talluq m'allah by an act of omission!

This is a very fine and subtle point, and needs to be thought over very carefully: Speaking of the fault of another is obvious gheebat. A person has not done this, but he has deliberately and volitionally - on an igtiari basis -brought the thought of anothers fault/s into his mind. This is against the concept of gushu - gushu demands that only Allah Ta'ala should be in his heart, and gairullah should have no place in his heart or mind on an igtiari basis.

Note the emphasis on the word "igtiari". At times, thoughts may crop up involuntarily. Unintentionally, ones thoughts turn to somebodys faults, but there is immediately a repugnance for such thoughts. The situation is completely different here. These unintentional thoughts are termed 'Waswasa". The response to waswasa is an inner distaste for such thoughts, contriteness, followed by a desire to eliminate these thoughts, with "La howla...." coming to ones lips immediately.

With this understanding of what gheebat is, that even bringing thoughts of the faults of others into one's heart is included, can there be any question of actually uttering words of gheebat?

An incident:

Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) saw a handsome young man, fair in complexion and neatly dressed, begging in the masjid.

The thought came to Zunaid: "A healthy young man, and wearing a good set of clothes, and yet he is begging?"

That night Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) had a remarkable dream. (One notes that persons in the class of such people are corrected very quickly by Allah Taala!) In the dream he saw a man approaching him and saying:

"Eat this meat!" He placed in front of Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) a dead body.

Zunaid: "But this is a corpse! To eat it is haraam!"

Person: "0 Yes! To eat this is haraam! But when you were eating the flesh of your dead Muslim brother, that was not haraam?! I"

Zunaid: "I never did such a foul thing".

Person: "0 No? Let me ask you: does the Qur'an Shareef not state that one should not make gheebat, would any of you love to eat the flesh of your dead brother?"

Zunaid: "Yes. The Qur'an shareef has stated thus."

Person: "Well, then you have eaten!"

Zunaid: "When did I do so?"

Person: "When you saw the young man begging, you brought the thought

into your heart, A young handsome man, fit and healthy, yet begging.'
Did you imagine gheebat is only when you relate a persons fault to others, and when you think of the faults of others it is not gheebat? You deliberately brought his fault to mind".

Let us pause here for a while and elaborate on some points.
To deliberately bring the faults of others into ones heart is also gheebat. That is point number one.

Point number two is that looking at others' faults has with it an attitude of contempt for them. Contempt for others is also haraam.

Point number three is finer and more subtle. What is the haq of the heart? The haq of the heart - its special privilege - is to be connected to Allah Taala permanently, with the awareness of Him being Hazir-Nazir. This being the case, why has the heart deviated for that little while to involve itself with the thought of gairullah? To be involved with gairullah is the direct opposite of talluq m'allah.

Point number four. If this thought was not igtiari, why was there no repugnance at the thought? Why was there no contriteness, nor discomfort? This shows that at that moment the talluq m'allah was absent.

We are still speaking in general terms. These points are for our benefit. However the condition of people is such that any attempt to make others leave this habit of gheebat is difficult. Tell a person involved
in spying and carrying tales that it is wrong, that it is against the commands in the Qur'an shareef; so why involve yourself for nothing in such activity?

What is his response? In his arrogance, he is prepared to go further. "Wahl I will even go up to him and tell him to his face l" Daring and rash!

Here is a thought: Persons involved in zina will be ashamed of their actions - any normal person will come away shame-faced, regretful of his weakness, contrite. This is taubah.

Somebody involved in gheebat, on the contrary, is neither ashamed, nor regretful. Instead of being contrite he is more daring!

And - if he has some Deen in him - he will even try to justify his sin by saying, "I am doing this for his islah," or "I am saying this to save you from the persons evil" These are just excuses. There is justification only if there is some connection between the parties, or if there is an islahi t'alluq.

These are the different aspects of gheebat. We had digressed while relating the qissah about Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.).

To continue with the qissah:

The person's remarks had the desired effect. Zunaid Baghdadi's heart was in turmoil, and in this anxious state his eyes opened from sleep. He got up, put on his clothes, and went out in search of the youth to ask his forgiveness.

ft has to be pointed out here that this compulsion of Zunaid Baghdadi's to set out in search of the youth to get his pardon, was a special state related to Zunaid's elevated status. Where the opposite party is not aware taubah is sufficient.

Approaching the river, Zunaid saw a young man strolling along the river-bank and recognised him as the same youth he had seen in the masjid. Zunaid greeted him.

"Assalamo alaikum."

The youth replied: Wa alaikum salarn." Without a pause, the youth continued, "Having seen a dream you have now come to ask for forgiveness! Without investigating, you jumped to conclusions: a fit young man, dressed in neat white clothes, and begging! You should, at least, have verified the facts first! How many days have I not spent without food. In spite of searching for work, I found no means. Is it not permissible, under the circumstances, for me to ask? As for these clothes that you see me wearing, they were handed to me Just this morning. Seeing externals only, you jumped to conclusions!"

Who is saying all this? The youth! He is not just anybody. He was one who had some rank! It just goes to show that it is not only old people who attain high spiritual ranks. Nay. This youth had also reached an elevated stage, through ibadat, taqwa, zikrullah, abstention from sin and t'alluq m'allah.

The youth addressed Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) further:

"I had thought that you had attained a very elevated rank, but it appears that you still have some deficiency!"

The youth was addressing whom? Zunaid Baghdadi (A.A.) - one of our foremost masha'eg!

Do not misunderstand. Do not conclude that this act of Zunaids in any way lowered his rank. No. This was a detail, a fine point, which had to be brought to his notice to enable him to progress even higher. This was his islah at the pinnacle that he already was on, to enable him to move on to a higher pinnacle.

The above point should be well remembered. Students often get confused. For instance, when students are studying Mishkat shareef and come across the virtues of the Sahaba (R.A.) they form wrong conclusions.

A case in point is that of the status of Hadhrat Abubakr (R.A.) relative to that of Hadhrat Umar (R.A.). Some of the virtues of Hadhrat Umar (R.A.) are such that the impression gained is that he has a higher status. The narration of a particularly excellent quality will create this impression. However, one should not look at a virtue in isolation, but one should look at the composite whole, the complete picture. It will then be seen that the virtues of Hadhrat Abubakr (R.A.) are such that he enjoys a higher rank.

Let us take a specific virtue of Hadhrat Umar (R.A.): Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihi wa Sallam) said that if there was a Nabi to come after him, it would have been Hadhrat Umar (R.A.) From this one may think: "Oho! What a high rank he has!" Remember, this is stating one particular virtue and is not a verdict over others.

Such points are confusing to the student. When teaching Hadith in the Madressah we have to explain these points at length to the students. This digression has a relevance to our qissah. Although the youth appears to be rebuking Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.), it does not mean that he has outstripped him in rank. (Indallah he may have - but that is something we cannot know.)

Lapses in a person may occur. It does not necessarily mean that the persons rank is lowered, nor that there is any difference in his perfection. A Wall may have such a

lapse as to be involved in an outwardly haraam deed. If this is just a momentary lapse, it makes no difference to the perfection in his wilayet.

One may even read of some Sahaba (R.A.) having such lapses, but this makes no difference to their rank, nor to their wilayet. The emphasis on the words "temporary lapse" is to be noted - there should be no persistence. And if the person makes proper taubah, where can there be persistence?

We are still dealing with huququl ibad and the topic of gheebat. We mentioned that some are not prepared to stop their gheebat, but will go a step further and tell the person "to his face". This is worse. It is haraam. Such a person is cursed in the Quran shareef:

Surah 103 Ayet I: "Woe unto every slanderer, traducer...."

Just as gheebat is haraam, reproaching or taunting - telling a person to his face" - is also haraam.

Huququl ibad and wealth. If you are in debt, settle your debts. If you do not have the means, ask your creditor to forgive you. The costliness of unsettled debts has already been brought to your notice - payment of 700 accepted namaz for every 3 paisa owing! Rather fulfill your trusts and settle your debts.

If a businessman has cheated his clients, but now the fear of Allah Ta'ala has gripped his heart, he should take pen and paper and calculate the sums involved. These amounts should then be returned to his respective clients.

Similarly, unlawfully seized land and houses should be returned to their rightful owners. If the owners are deceased, the heirs become the owners.

If you have stolen anything, return the stolen item/s. In business partnerships you may have cheated your partner/s. Calculate the amounts and return these to the respective partners.

In a situation where you do not have the means to settle, nor can the creditors be traced, or they have died, make istigfar and dual for them.

On attaining t'alluq mallah and becoming be'it - or even without becoming beit - many people make taubah and start going straight. But what about compensating for past sins? Many give no thought to it. The water in the hauz is still contaminated

This qissah concerns a person who had become be it to Hadhratwala. One day Hadhratwala spoke to him: "It is a long time since you have become be it, but in all this time you have not related your condition or progress. The talluq of be'it is for the purpose of relating your hal (condition)."

How can a mureed adopt an attitude of independence while his Sheikh is still alive? How can he maintain silence and not relate his inner state to his Sheikh? Once, (I was also present), a khalifa of Hadhratwala asked him concerning continued correspondence from a khalifa. This is an important point in Sulook. Hadhratwala replied with a note of warning: "If one's contact with ones Sheikh is severed, if one does not maintain this islahi contact, there is a real danger of a change coming into one's nisbat, into one's t'alluq m'allah".

The message is quite clear. One should continue relating one's hal to one's Sheikh even after having attained the rank of Khalifa. While in Hadhratwala's presence, we used to see islahi letters coming from prominent Ulema like Moulana Waseehullah and others.

To continue:
The mureed answered Hadhratwala: "What is there to say or ask? 1 am a poor person. I am performing my five daily namaz. What is shown to me I do. I keep my roza in Ramadhân. I do not have wealth, so there is no zakat to give, and the question of Haj does not arise at all."

Hadhratwala said, "Is that so?" He then proceeded to question the mureed concerning his past and his business dealings (muamulat). From what he said his ibadat appeared to be in order, but what about his muamulat?
Then only did the mureed's eyes open. "Oho! Then I am tainted from the roots of the hair on my head to the nails on my toes! In what way? Well.. before becoming be'it he used to be a thief! What must I do now? I do not have any wealth so as to return the money I had stolen." Hadhratwala advised him: "As far as you have knowledge of the people from whom you stole, go up to them and ask their forgiveness. What else is there to do except to get them to overlook what you stole."

The mureed was a sincere person. He went. His heart had already developed t'alluq m'allah. The medan of Hashr filled his vision. He went. After a long period of absence he returned, clutching a piece of paper with a list of names in his hand.

The names were of the people from whom he had stolen. Next to each name was the amount stolen. What good people they were - they pardoned him and even signed their names to that effect.

There was a Hindu persons name as well - 500 rupees of his had been stolen (500 rupees of those days would be equivalent to some 500 000 rupees today!). The Hindu had written: "Hasbatalillah I have forgiven him." For the sake of Allah the Hindu had pardoned him the entire sum!

Having noted all this, Hadhratwala asked: "How can one be sure that you had gone to them and that these are their signatures?"

Mureed: "You may use whatever method you please to confirm it." Hadhratwala: "Very well. Go to the post office and get as many reply-paid envelopes as there are names on your list. Writing for confirmation will be sufficient."
Mureed: "Very well". He went to the post office, bought the envelopes and presented these to Hadhratwala.
Hadhratwala: "No. No. I had no intention of writing to them. But, seeing you have bought the envelopes, I will buy them from you."
Mureed: "I did not bring them to sell to you. I will use them for the mail-order business I am doing. Give them back to me."
Hadhratwala returned the envelopes to him.
Huququl ibad! Are you beginning to understand what it means?

This is the tartib of tazkiyah of the nafs, the methodology for the rectification of the character. How many persons exist so desirous of forgiveness as this mureed?

How many are prepared to go around asking to be pardoned by those whom they have cheated?

Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) is one of the "Greats" among our masha'eg, with countless people having benefited from him.

Shibli came to him, requesting to become beit.
Zunaid Baghdadi replied: "I have no objection to making you beit and entering you into the silsilah. However, work should have a methodology. You have been a Ra'is in your province and you have been a hakim there as well. Firstly, proceed to your locality and ask forgiveness from all those over whom you have ruled. Then we will consider be'it."

Nowadays be'it has become very cheap. It is an everyday request: "Make me be'it." This appears to be the only desire - to become beit.

In these days of our decline as Muslims, some are made beit on request, others are given little tasks to perform before their request is acceded to.

The reason for giving in easily to such requests is the following: in this era of our decline the process of beit will, at least, keep the mureed away from customs and bidah, get him/her to perform the five daily namaz, get him/her involved in some waza'ef, and simultaneously it is hoped, that others will be saved from any mischief from the mureed. These are some simple objectives attained by the process of be'it nowadays.

But before...Oho! Great trials and tests took place before initiation into a silsilah. Candidates were scrutinised properly.

Among other things, was the candidate capable of eating properly? Unknown to him, he was being "interviewed". You must know what "interview" is - this is a word very much in vogue nowadays! The masha'eg in days gone by used to "interview" the potential mureed. The idea was to see whether he had any worth in him for the important privilege of entering a silsilah.

One Sheikh used to provide the applicant with a meal, making sure that the salin and roti provided were in proportional amounts.

After the candidate had eaten, the Sheikh would inspect the remains of the meal. If both salin and roti had been eaten, well and good. If the salin was eaten but the roti remained; or the opposite, the roti was eaten and the salin remained, he would tell the candidate: "There is no equilibrium in you. Our temperaments are not the same, and we will not get along together." He would not make him beit. The candidate had 'Tailed" the "interview".

In worldly affairs, a lot of emphasis is placed on interviews. We hear of people having passed their written examinations, but failing on the results of an interview.

Here is another qissah:

Goolam Yahya is well known to students. He was a great scholar, excelling in philosophy and logic. In fact his kitab has been, and still is taught as a standard textbook.

He presented himself at the residence of a very well-known Sheikh, Mirza Jan-jana. The doorman went inside to obtain permission for him to enter -nobody was allowed to enter without permission. The appointment of a doorman was a common practice with the Naqshabandi masha'eg of old.
When permission had been obtained, Goolam Yahya entered and greeted: "Assalamo alaikum."
Mirza Jan-jana replied, "Wa alaikum salam". But as he lifted his head and his eyes fell on Goolam Yahya, he quickly covered his face with his one arm, and shoo-ed away Goolam Yahya with the other hand, saying, "There is no place here for a bear!" Quite perplexed, Goolam Yahya left the room.

In actual fact, that one glance by Mirza Jan-jana was sufficient to size up Goolam Yahya. The reason for calling him a bear was that he had a big, thick beard which was unkempt and disorderly. Being an alim, a molvi saheb, the condition of his beard betrayed a streak of disorderliness in his personality.

Once outside Goolam Yahya paused to ponder over Mirza Jan-jana's reaction. "It must be my beard," he surmised correctly, Straightaway he went to a nearby barber to have it trimmed.
When he presented himself again, beard neatly combed and shaped, the response was completely different.

Mirza Jan-jana welcomed him happily, asked him to be seated, and complimented him, "Ma sha Allah! You now look like a human being"

Did you notice how quick the "interview" was? Just a glance and the "interview" was over. Each person is judged according to the rank he wishes to attain.

In our worldly affairs, a candidate applying for the governmental position of Collector, will be interviewed with regard to qualities desired in such a person. Is he strong-willed? Is he firm and dependable? etc.,etc.

Here is another way a Sheikh may "interview" a candidate: provide him with a cup of tea. If he drinks audibly, slurping his tea, he has failed. Our Deeni teaching is that water (or any liquid) should not be drunk in a noisy fashion - animals drink that way!
When eating, chew silently. This is also part of our Deeni teachings. These etiquettes are also part of Mans natural temperament, specifically made part of our lifestyle by our Deen. The fact is that others have adopted our teachings, whereas we have neglected these very teachings.

Many are under the wrong impression that these etiquettes belong to another culture. Careful study will show that these are from Qur'an and Hadith.

A few other illustrations:
A person lifts up the bamboo door-screen and enters without seeking permission first. Failed. Why did he not seek permission? This etiquette is also ours. The Qur'an shareef instructs us to seek permission before entering a persons abode. Another person leaves the room. In doing so he lifts up the door-screen and lets it fall back askew, one corner down and the other corner up. Failed. Why this

disorder? Why not depart with serenity? Others now have to take the trouble to set the screen straight.

Do you understand these etiquettes? They are part of our own teachings. These are etiquettes which bring "admiyet" into a person.

This discussion has come in incidentally. Let us continue with the qissah of Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) and Shibli. Shibli had been refused beit. Instead he had been instructed to ask forgiveness from his former subjects. Shibli departed and did exactly as instructed. He went around for a whole year asking for forgiveness, and returned.

Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) was impressed by his sincerity. He now instructed Shibli to go out and beg from the people for a whole year. Just consider: Shibli, a man from the nobility, a former ruler, told to go and beg! His islah was in progress. Be'it will take place at the proper time, but in the meantime his islah was in full swing.

In this age ask even a nonentity to go out and beg and see the reaction. The person will feel most offended. He will consider it an insult. He will leave, mumbling: "What kind of Sheikh is this? Me, go and beg?"

In days gone by, seekers of Truth were sincere. Shibli went out begging. A whole year he begged. In all this time he received...nothing! He reported back.
Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.): "Ofo! People gave you nothing? What a shame! Never mind. Go out and beg again. But this time, whatever people give you, see that you distribute to the poor!"

Food was provided by the khanqa. Those were the times when the khanqa and the madressah were sponsored by the Muslim rulers. The expenses of these institutions were specifically budgeted for. This was all done according to the teachings in "Hedaya". Now, no more. These institutions are forced to go out for collections in order to continue functioning.

Shibli set out to beg again. This time people gave, but whatever Shibli received he gave to the poor. In this way another year went by.

How many years had passed by? Three. Yes, three years had passed by since that day that he had come with the request to become beit. One year was spent asking for forgiveness; one year went by in begging and not receiving anything; and one year went by in begging and giving to the poor.

Now only did he have permission to sit in the majlis. His islah had been made. The exercises that he had been put through in the three years had made sure that there was no takabbur, no ujub, etc. The correct tartib had been followed - that is the removal of the akhlaqe razilah, before going on to the next stage.

Nowadays, people want to be raised to the level of khalifa even before becoming be'it! A person wrote to me about a dream he had. In the dream a particular buzrug had asked him why was he not making others beit. This was now bothering him!

Only after three years of effort was Shibli allowed the privilege of sitting in the majlis of Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) Only now was some shagl shown to him.

Many people come here requesting to be shown some zikr, some tasbih, on the very first day! Very well. InshaAllah Taala, that will be shown, but the tartib is that islah comes first!
Remove all the debasing qualities first. Remove the akhlaqe razilah and emblazen yourself with the akhlaqe hamidah. Clean the nafs first. Remove all the dirt and filth, all the malodorous items, all the bad and evil. Get this right first, properly. Remove the deficiencies. Fill up the cracks and the holes. The heart can attain a glow and lustre only after the filth and impurities - the akhlaqe razilah - have been removed.

What had happened to Shibli in those three years? The animalism in him was removed, the animalism that is kept in every human being.

Students of Logic will understand the following: When it is asked, "Min al-insan?" (What is Man), the answer is, "Hayawanun natiqun" (an animal having intelligence).

Hadhratwala used to say that the scholars have given the above answer, but, in his humble opinion, a more correct answer would be "hayawanun motafakkirun" (an animal having fikr). "fikr" means having ones vision on the eventual outcome, at first sight.

The scholars of Logic are all agreed that the subject of Logic is meant for people like us and not the Auliya. The gaze of the Auliya-Allah falls immediately on the correct outcome of a situation without them having to study the science of Logic.

This human being, this "hayawanun natiqun", whose tazkiyah has been made has had the animalism removed. This leaves him with the second quality in the afore-mentioned definition, namely "intelligence". This is how he is differentiated from animals.

An important point to remember is that the process of tazkiyah removes the "animalism", but not the "animal" in man.

The instinctive animal qualities have not been entirely eliminated by the process leading to islah - these instinctive drives have been subjected to intelligence. There is no change in those basic instincts Man shares with animals. What has changed is that these instinctive qualities will not find expression contrary to the dictates of intelligence. There will be no abuse of ones faculties.

Man has three basic faculties - Quwate Gazbiyah (Rage), Quwate Shahwiyah (Passion), and Quwate Aqliyah (Reason). Each of these can exist at any one of three levels - deficiency, equilibrium or excess.

Should Quwate Gazbiyah be in a state of deficiency and be absent, the person will not be able to express any anger. Who is then going to wage jihad? Who will make the correct effort to protect his possessions and his life? How will law and order be correctly established in the land?.

Should Quwate Shahwiyah be eliminated how will off-spring be born? The Ambiya (alaihimus salam) had off-spring, proof of the desirability of a certain degree of passion. The aim is not to eliminate the basic instincts, but to terminate their abuse.

This is tazkiyah of the nafs. The purpose of Sulook is the proper and correct Shari tazkiyah of the nafs. Islah, carried out correctly, will bring about this tazkiyah. This was the process Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) put Shibli through. Huququl ibad had to be fulfilled through the asking of forgiveness from Shibli's subjects. Tazkiyah was done through begging, which broke all pride and arrogance in him. After the tazkiyah, or with it, comes tajliyahe qalb (embellishing the heart) with the akhlaqe hamidah, making sure that both huququllah and huququl ibad are taken into account.

In the beginning, it was said that Man has been sent into this world for the sole purpose of ibadat. What has been laid out in front of you is the tartib involved in the fulfillment of this responsibility. The Salek and the Tabibe islah have to follow this method.

Sulook Is not merely reciting wazaef. Many hanker only for wazaef and do not look at the tartib. These people hanker for that for which one will not be called to account, and neglect that which comes first and for which one is accountable. One bears responsibility for fulfilling huquq and not for huzuz.

The mustahabat, the mustahsanat, are all parts of the huzuz. Similarly, kaifiyat also form parts of the huzuz. These are not parts of the huquq. Some tend to run after kaifiyat. Kaifiyat produce enjoyment and delight. Sometimes there Is crying. At times the heart is also crying. Some or other emotional state overwhelms the person.

But remember, kaifiyat are also part of 'makhluq. So, how can the salek pursue the makhluq when his objective is the Khaleq?

Allah Taala is not going to ask: "Why did you neglect your waza'ef? Why did you neglect your nafl ibadat?" No. But Allah Ta'ala is definitely going to ask: "Why did you neglect the necessary Shariat commands of the Deen?"
"Did you perform your namaz?
"If you did, why did you not perform it with jamat? What Shari excuse prevented you from making your namaz with jamat?" etc., etc.

Do you understand this difference between huquq and huzuz? Let us illustrate it in another manner:
Food that we eat can be put into two categories. The one category is essential for the proper nutrition of the body. In this category we have items like roti, meat, dhal, etc. It is the huquq of the body to have these basic foods in order to thrive properly. If one interferes with this right of the body by not eating - staying hungry for no valid reason - one will be questioned for one's neglect.

The rule is: Eat to fill ones stomach, not to fill ones desires. Why did you not eat your fill? Why did you deliberately stay hungry so that you became weak? You will be answerable for this neglect. To eat your fill and maintain your health and strength falls in the category of huquq.

The second category of foodstuff contain items prepared in addition to the basics. These items are not essential for the nutrition of the body. Examples of such items

are chutney, achar, halwa, morabbo, etc. This is the category of huzuz. These items add taste, whet the appetite.

If a person leaves out the roti, dhal and meat, and eats only chutney and achar, a bit of fruit and morabbo, will he be able to maintain his health and strength? No, obviously not. Yes, he may experience some temporary pleasure, but the eventual outcome will be injurious.

In a similar manner, one's roohani nutrition can be categorised into the category of basic and essential - the huquq - and the category of huzuz -what is additional to the basic. The huquq cannot be neglected; the huzuz may or may not be performed.

Nafl ibadat, whether namaz or roza, fall in the category of huzuz - like chutney and achar, they add to the taste and delight! Nafl namaz may be those that are performed at the times of the five daily namaz, or they may be those at other prescribed times - Ishraq, Chasht, Awwabin, Tahajjud.

The nafl roza are kept in the months of Shaban (15th), Shawwal (any 6 days), Zil Haj (9th), Moharram (9th & 10th or 10th & 11th). One may keep three nafl roza every month too (13th, 14th & 15th).

Being nafl, if not performed, one will not be answerable. However, nafl and waza'ef bring joy and light to one's ibadat. That is one reason why they are prescribed.

Another reason for recommending them is to fill-in any deficiencies in our necessary ibadat. Just like condiments, fruit, salad and halwa will provide vitamins

and minerals lacking in the basic food, similarly the nafl is there to fill-in any shortcomings in our huquq.

The following comes in Hadith shareef: When ones namaz are weighed on the Day of Qiyamat, and are found to be deficient, Allah Taala will ask the mala'ekah to see whether there is any nawafel in ones Book of Good Deeds. The malaekah will look and say, "Yes, there are". Allah Taala will then order, "Compensate the deficiency in his fard with the nawafel!" And this will be done. The nawafel will have been of benefit.

This is an even more important reason than the first for performing ones nafl. Who is there who can say that his fard is absolutely perfect? The importance of performing even more nawafel is obvious. In this manner one may be able to compensate for the weakness in ones huquq.

What has been presented to you today is the tartib of tazkiyah, the method of islah.

This has two parts to it: Firstly, tazkiyah - the removal of the akhlaqe razilah from the nafs: secondly, following tazkiyah, comes embellishment of the heart with akhlaqe hamidah. The islah should not be merely superficial. It should be done in such a way as to be permanent.

How to judge? How to see if there is permanence in ones islah? In the case of tazkiyah which is deep-rooted, at the time of any inclination towards akhlaqe razilah, the person will immediately stop himself without consciously devising any specific plan. Understand this last phrase well. The person will stop himself

without consciously telling himself "Allah is watching me!"; without consciously looking through the different remedies for that particular unseemly inclination.

This is the standard!! This is the criterion!!
You may not have reached this level. In that case, the second level is good enough. This is to immediately stop the nafs when it inclines towards the akhlaqe razilah, by consciously putting into operation any of the procedures prescribed for that particular bad quality.
This will indicate that the person has attained the objective of islah of the nafs.

Thus, today the tartib of Sulook has been laid out in front of you. Supporting ayat from Qur'an and Hadith, and qissas of the Akabir, the Auliya-Allah and their mureeds have been quoted.

It was emphasised that, with our Akabir, islah took place before the formality of beit. The following qissah will further go to illustrate this point:

Hadhratwala had gone to some place. A Rais residing there had requested to become be'it. Hadhratwala had acceded to his request and had appointed a specific time for the Rais to present himself for the formal ceremony of beit.

Because the mureed-to-be was a Ra'is, he felt he had to distribute mithai to mark this happy occasion. This is not part of our custom - when a person becomes be'it, he is not expected to distribute mithai. On the other hand, if the person does distribute mithai, there is no objection either. But still, it is not part of our practice. Let us digress to elucidate this point further:

Some acts which are mubah are prohibited when harmful effects set in. An example of this is the distribution of mithai at the khatam of Qur'an - at the completion of the recital of the Quran shareef in tarawih during Ramadhân. This distribution is mubah. If it was not mubah, Hadhratwala would not have been a party to it: In the early years he gave consent, but when harm intruded he put a stop to the practice. What started happening was that people not making namaz came just for the mithai; others used to perform their tarawih elsewhere and arrive there for the mithai; very young children started coming on that night; the floor of the masjid and courtyard became strewn with mithai, with people trampling all over the mithai; others again, started queuing more than once for the mithai; etc. Because of the harm, this practice came to be prohibited.

The principle involved is that a permissible mubah act will become prohibited when harm or corruption sets in.

This principle must not be confused with the following: certain acts have two opposing approaches. Both are permissible. When one approach is adopted the other one does not fall into the category of being prohibited.

Examples of these are:

a) The imam facing the jamat after the Fajr and Asr namaz. He sits with the congregation on his right. To sit in such a way that the congregation is on his left, is permissible. However, I have not seen our Akabir adopting this latter position.
b) Qira't-galfe-imam. This is permissible by the ruling of Imam Abu Hanifa (R.A.) but he has chosen the opposite viewpoint. This is a long and complicated masalah.

c) Rafa-i-dein. This is not so complicated. Imam Abu Hanifa (R.A.) has never said that it is haraam. What he has said is that leaving-off rafa-I-dein is superior (afzal). A person who has never in his life practiced rafa'-i-dein, should occasionally do so, ensuring that one has acted on the Hadith in support of rafa-i-dien as well.

d) Position of hands in namaz. Imam Malik (R.A.) has ruled that the hands should be at the side, not folded.

Imam Shafis (R.A.) ruling is that the hands should be folded on the chest. Imam Abu Hanifa's (R.A.) ruling is that the folded hands should be placed over the lower abdomen. If you have never followed the other rulings, do so occasionally. They are not prohibited.

e) To recite "Ameen" loudly is also not prohibited. Occasionally say "Ameen" loudly as well.

All these alternate rulings have Hadith to support them. The difference that exists between the four Imams is in the question of "afzaliet"- which would be superior. Each Imam has placed his own ruling as superior, but has not categorised the other rulings as "na-jaez".

These are matters of thoughts, for the thoughtful.

This topic is incidental. Let us go back to Hadhratwala and the Rais: The Ra'is arrived at the appointed time for the ceremony of be'it. A basketful of mithai, carried by his servant on his head, was also brought with for distribution. The servant placed the basket on the floor and departed.

Hadhratwala said, "A certain person has requested to see me, and I have to proceed there now. You come with me. Insha'allah taala, if I have the opportunity, I will

make you be'it there."
The servant had gone. Who was going to take the basket of mithai along? The Ra'is bent down, lifted the basket and placed it carefully on his own head. Walking thus, he followed Hadhratwala.

The process of islah had started, before the formality of beit. The Roohani Tabib, Hadhratwala, had recognised the temperament. "Coming to become beit himself, but getting the servant to carry the mithai! Ofo! This will not do!" The treatment was commenced immediately.

Arriving at their destination, Hadhratwala attended to his work. When finished, he said, "Ofo! I have another appointment as well. There is just not enough time to make you beit now. Never mind. Come with me. Insha'allah ta'ala, if I have time there I will make you beit." In this manner Hadhratwala got the Rais to go with him three to four different places, the Rais carrying the basket of mithai on his head, and onlookers marvelling at this unique parade.

Hadhratwala told us later in his majlis, "Knowingly, I led him through such places where his friends and acquaintances could see him." Finally, they returned to their starting point. Hadhratwala told the Ra'is, "Ofo! Unfortunately I had no time to make you be'it at any of the other places. I have the time and opportunity now". Hadhratwala went on to make him be'it.
Yes, the mithai also got distributed!

The Rais was, after all, a man of nobility, and therefore a man of understanding. Once outside, he told others, "I had understood immediately. The treatment of

takabbur in me had started. I recognised my faux pas in getting the servant to bring the mithai. I should have brought it myself."

Here you have seen the way the roohani illness was treated by the Roohani doctor - how the treatment had commenced before beit. Hadhratwala used to say, "In my methods, the first step is fana." Moulana Abdul Bari Saheb, who was present at the time, was puzzled. But the kitabs have fana as the final stage."
Hadhratwala replied, "Yes, that is true . But with me, fana is the first step. Until there is no fana, islah will not take place."

Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) had put Shibli through a process which led to fana. Hadhratwala did the same thing with the Rais.

One has to work oneself up to such a stage. So much so, that if a person comes from the back and gives you a thump with his fist, you will not even turn around to see who it is. Not even for that moment must the heart be distracted from the remembrance of Allah taala. This awareness of Allah Taala, this gushu, is to be maintained all the time, not only in namaz.

That is why it was said, right in the beginning, that Allah Ta'ala had sent Man into this world for the sole purpose of making His ibadat. Our objective is to be in His ibadat during all our activities.
To put it in another way, Allah Ta'ala is saying, "When you eat and drink according to My laws and instructions, it is ibadat; when you answer the call of nature, according to My laws and instructions, it is ibadat..." and so forth. This can only happen when the nafs has been cleansed of the akhlaqe razilah.

Remember that the basic instincts will remain, manifesting themselves when ordered to do so.

The Qazi Saheb will be told, "When you enter the court-room, do so with dignity, seat yourself with pomp, lean back in your chair with majesty." These instructions for the Qazi appear in the kitabs - if you so wish you may check them.
The critic may say, "But these are all signs of takabbur!"
Yes, very much so. The Qazi has been ordered to adopt this attitude. This is an occasion for such behaviour - so that awe is created in the public for this office, so that the administration of justice does not become a sport and game.

The majesty of the Qazi and the court-room have to be maintained. Should the Head of State, the Khalifa, be called to give evidence, then too, he will have to stand and give evidence, while the Qazi is seated. The fact that the Qazi has been appointed by the Khalifa who is his superior, does not alter the situation.
The takabbur that the Qazi exhibits is suratan, not haqiqatan. From this one can deduce another important rule: Do not judge yourself against the behaviour of the Ahlullah - they may exhibit certain characteristics which may appear haughty. Their haughtiness is suratan, yours is haqiqatan!

The Ahlullah have gone through the process of tazkiyah. They are aware of the Greatness of Allah Taala at all times. They bear the thought of presenting themselves in front of Him constantly.
We cannot draw an analogy with them. Their anger is suratan, our rage is haqiqatan.

The lives of the Ahlullah are according to the Shariat, whether one looks at ibadat, muasharat or muamulat. While the creation is lost in slumber, they are awake. Their muamulat are clean; their muasharat is such that they do not cause any inconvenience to others. On the contrary, they bring ease and comfort to others. Their temperaments are even, changing their attitude only when others deliberately break the relationship.

It certainly appears in the Hadith shareef that when Allah taala loves somebody it is announced on earth that the creation should love that person, too.
The Mufassirin write that this does not include that situation where somebody has caused a breach in the relationship because of some worldly affair. How is it possible to be affectionate to such people?

To end, let us recapitulate.
Why has Man been sent to this world? For ibadat.
What should ones every breath and act in this world be? Ibadat. These subjects have been explained at length to you. Many have categorised agriculture, commerce, etc as "worldly" activities, whereas, in fact, they are all ibadat. Only when these activities go beyond the limits of the Shariat, do they become the opposite of ibadat. We are to blame for taking them outside the bounds of the Shariat and making them "worldly" activities instead of ibadat. You will find the virtues of agriculture and commerce listed in our Deeni kitabs. If these activities were not ibadat, why would their virtues appear in Hadith?

We have been created for ibadat. It is in this light that each one of us should judge and assess ourselves.

May Allah Taala give us all tawfiq - with ikhlas and sidq, continuously. Khudda Hafiz.

(Translation of the majlis of Hadhrat Maulana Maseehullah Khan Saheb, held on the 21st September, 1988, in Jalalabad, India.)

Chapter No.:

2

1.INTRODUCTION

In the discourse "Tartib of Suluk" (see "For Friends." No. 1.), Hadhratji skillfully and gently led us along strange and fascinating avenues. Along our journey, we stopped at the khanqas of Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi , Hadhrat Mirzah Jan-Janah and Hadhrat Thanwi (Hadhratwala). Even more fascinating were the different concepts that we were introduced to. From amongst the various topics discussed, we had a chance to peep at topics like 'Ilm, the Madrasah and Jihad.

In this discourse, with the same charm and simple logic, Hadhratji takes us again by the hand and leads us into the very depths of 'ilm, the Madrasah, the Khanqah and Jihad - topics related directly and indirectly to each and every Muslim.

These few sentences do not suffice as an introduction to this majlis. The introduction to the first discourse should be re-read, as the comments made there also apply to this majlis - as well as to every forthcoming majlis!
Some have expressed the feeling that the level of some of the topics is "too high"; or the points too subtle to understand. Here, one should bear in mind the golden rule: Digest and assimilate what you do understand, and leave the rest till later. On re-reading these "evergreen" discourses at regular intervals, one is pleasantly surprised at the amount one does understand. Secondly, the logical step is to ask any one of the Ulema-e-Haq to explain those points not quite clear. (This latter step is also recommended to ensure that there are no inadvertent errors that may have crept into the translation. A second reason is the following: many points are so fine that they require detailed explanations before being understood. As this aspect is beyond the scope of these translations the services of the Ulema-e-Haq are essential.)

During the course of this discourse, reference is made to an interesting episode that occurred during the time of the Khilafat of Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) (A passing reference to this incident is also made in the discourse "Tartib of Sulیk" on page 35.) Before proceeding with the translation of the discourse, this particular incident is being presented to you

Note: This present copy of "For Friends, Booklet No. Two" is a reprint of the one published in March 1990.This copy has been revised and reformatted. Seeing that Hadhratji passed away in 1992, reference to him has now changed with the epithet being added. Other changes have also been made where it was deemed necessary. In this revised copy Hadhrat Mufti Aqilur-Rahman sahib, who compiled the Urdu version, added a qissah as a footnote in the section on "kasre nafs". This qissah has been reproduced at the end of the Glossary.]

Dr. Ismaiel Mangera

2.WAQI'AH

Time period: Sometime during the period that Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) was the Khalifah, Amirul Mu'minin - Leader of the Believers. (35 - 40 A.H.)

Personalities involved:

[i] Hadhrat Ali (r.a.);

[ii] Qazi Shureh (r.a.), a judge, appointed to this position by Hadhrat Umar (r.a.) during his Khilafat;

[iii] a Yahud who lived in Madina as a subject, under the rule of the Amirul Mu'minin.

Amirul Mu'minin, Hadhrat Ali's (r.a.) armour had been stolen. One day, while walking through the market place, he recognized his armour in the possession of a Yahىd. He went up to the Yahud and said, "This is my armour." The Yahud retorted, "Bring witnesses to prove it. Alternatively, file a law-suit!"

[In relating this incident, Hadhratwala(R.A.) states: Bear in mind that, firstly, the Yahud as a nation had a very disgraced position throughout the world, since the time that they had been rebellious to Hadhrat Musa(A.S.). Secondly, they were a dominated minority group in the Islamic State. Thirdly, this Yahud was addressing the Head of State! This is the freedom of speech and action, within the law, granted to subjects. This brashness of the Yahud is an example of how the ta'lim of Islam was not mere theory, but was upheld in practice from the Khalifah downwards.]

Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) proceeded to Qazi Shureh (r.a.) and laid a charge of theft against the Yahud. The case came before the Qazi. Both plaintiff and defendant presented themselves in front of the Qazi on an equal footing.

Qazi Shureh (r.a.), without being overawed by the presence of Amirul Mu'minin, Hadhrat Ali (r.a.), seated himself with the pomp that the situation demanded. Calmly, without any trace of discomfiture or panic, he started his questioning. He asked the Yahud, "Does the armour belong to Hadhrat Ali (r.a.)?" The Yahud flatly denied it.

Thereupon Qazi Shureh (r.a.) turned to Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) and calmly requested, "Bring witnesses to support your claim."

[Hadhratwala comments: To doubt the validity of the claim of Amirul Mu'minin, Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) was unthinkable. Yet, proceedings had to be in accordance with the rules laid down by the Shariat. Wallah! Others who have adopted civilized attitudes have learnt these from Islam and then, too, they could not equal the standards laid out by Islam!]

Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) produced two witnesses. One was his son, Imam Hasan (r.a.), and the other was his freed slave, whose name was Qambar. In his opinion, the evidence of these two was acceptable in the Islamic law-court. However, Qazi Shureh (r.a.) differed in his understanding of the law related to acceptability of witnesses. In his opinion, the evidence of the son in favour of his father was not acceptable. He thus rejected the evidence of Imam Hasan (r.a.), accepting the evidence of the freed slave only.

Qazi Shureh (r.a.) addressed Hadhrat Ali (r.a.), "Bring another witness in place of Imam Hasan (r.a.). The evidence of your slave, seeing he has been freed, is accepted." Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) replied, "I have no other witnesses." Because of a lack of sufficient evidence - a second acceptable witness - Qazi Shureh (r.a.) dismissed Hadhrat Ali's (r.a.) claim, acting according to the Shariat and not according to his personal i'tiqad (faith and confidence) on the truthfulness of Hadhrat Ali (r.a.).

The Yahud, in the meantime, was observing the whole proceedings with full attention. On leaving the courtroom, he watched intently to see the reaction of Hadhrat Ali (r.a.). There was not even a flicker of annoyance on Hadhrat Ali's (r.a.) face. Not a word of displeasure at the verdict passed his lips, despite being "Asadullah" - "The Lion of Allah" - the title that he had earned for his ferociousness and courage in jihad against the kuffar.

Coming out of his reverie, the Yahud addressed Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) thus: "The reality of the situation has become quite clear to me, that your mazhab (religion) is a true one and your attitude is its effect on you." The Yahud continued, "Here, take

it - this armour is yours! And I herewith proclaim that I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammed is His slave and messenger:

Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) said, "I, in turn, present this armour to you!"

The nett outcome was that the Yahud became a Muslim. He remained with Hadhrat Ali (r.a.), until a day came when he became shahid in a battle (i.e. he was martyred).

3.ILM, JIHAD, THE MADRASAH AND THE KHANQAH.

[This is a translation of a majlis-e-khas held in Jalalabad, India, by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammed Masihullah Khan sahib . Saturday 2nd Rabi-ul Awwal 1409, corresponding to the 15th October 1988.]

[Hadhratji commenced this majlis by drawing the attention of those present to the majlis-e-am held the day before, Friday, after the Jumu'ah namaz.]

Those of you who were present yesterday when a wa'z (lecture) of Hadhratwala (R.A.)was read, will have heard how the Ulema were addressed by him. He stressed the point that the responsibility of the reformation of the general Muslim populace rested on the shoulders of the Ulema. The Ulema body formed that axis around which the improvement of the character of the Muslim populace revolved.

4.WHO IS AN ALIM?

The question arises: Who is an alim? One can state categorically that all the Sahabah(r.a.) were Ulema. We can thus state quite confidently that an alim is not necessarily that person who sits with prescribed textbooks (darsiyat-e-kutub) in

front of him and has an ustad (teacher) lecturing to him from a textbook. What kitabs were in front of the Sahabah(r.a.)? The Sahabah(r.a.) presented themselves to Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), focus of the Divine mission, to be taught by him without the aid of any kitabs.

This shows quite clearly that the aim and objective is to gain 'ilm of Deen, and this is neither dependent on, nor confined to, kitabs. This is also borne out by the following Hadith sharif:

Seek 'ilm even though it be in (a country as distant as) China.

Another Hadith sharif states:

To seek 'ilm is fardh (compulsory) on every Muslim male.

Another narration includes every Muslim female as well:

To acquire 'ilm is fardh. The 'ilm referred to is knowledge of Deen, that Knowledge ('ilm) that was revealed through Wahi (Revelation) - Wahi-e-jali and Wahi-e-khafi - the Qur'an Sharif being "Wahi-e-jali" and the Hadith sharif being "Wahi-e-khafi". "Fiqh" is the setting out of the rules and laws contained in the Qur'an and Hadith sharif into a systematic arrangement, but nevertheless the ta'lim of Fiqh - the teachings of these rules and laws - still remain Wahi (Revelation).

Confirmation of the importance of attaining 'ilm, as well as its reality (haqiqat) have been stated in an amazing and wondrous manner in a specific ayet (verse) of the Qur'an Sharif. I am not a hafiz1, so may I request a hafiz to recite the relevant ayet which states that when the order for jihad is given, do not all go out together.....

[At this point Hadhratji gave the lead and Haffeji Nىr Muhammed Sahib recited

the complete ayet.]

All the Believers should not go out together (for jihad). Why should one (small) group from every (large) group not go out, (and the rest remain behind,) so that (these) may acquire the understanding of Deen, so that they may warn those who had gone out on their return, in order that they may adopt caution. (S.9. A.122)

I am not a hafiz, so the whole ayet has been recited by a hafiz: When the order for jihad is given, do not all go out together. Rather, one jama't (group) should go out and one jama't should remain with you (Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam)) to acquire 'ilm. Those interested, can look up the relevant tafsir (commentaries). The purpose here is to show the importance of 'ilm compared to jihad.

5.PURPOSE OF JIHAD

Let us now look into the subject of jihad. Waging jihad - jihad-e- amali - against the kuffar is not to force them to bring Iman. Jihad is to remove those obstacles that prevent isha't-e-nas - the dissemination of the teachings of Qur'an and Hadith sharif - for the sake of Deen; and to forcefully remove those obstacles that prevent those desirous of the Deen from coming towards the Deen. Jihad is the final phase in the removal of these obstacles. Otherwise, there is no need for jihad.

The case put to the kuffar is as follows: "Why do you cause difficulties to those who have become Mu'min? Why do you harass them? Why do you insult and humiliate them? Jan, mal and izzat-o-abru - life, wealth and honour and respect: Why do you harass them and cause them hardships in these? Those who wish to come towards Iman, why prevent them by tyranny? "You yourselves bring Iman or

not - there is no compulsion. You do your work, and we will do ours. However, if you do not heed our words, at this stage we say nothing - we recognize our weak position."

There is no sense in knowingly putting ourselves into difficulties in a situation where our objectives are unattainable. The teaching of Islam forbids one to deliberately place oneself in difficulties, knowing full well that one's objectives are unattainable.

That is why the thirteen years in Makkah - the initial blessed Makkan Period - were spent with tremendous mujahadah2 and riyadhat by the Muslims. The persecution produced such spiritual discipline and strength that all nafsaniyet was eliminated, and only radha-go'ey and radha-jo'ey remained - whatever was to be said was solely for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala; and whatever was to be done was solely for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

Character improvement in its entirety and perfection, progressed for thirteen years by waging jihad against the nafs. Tackle this first, so that when you are free from this task, your entire actions, ta'limi and ta'mili, 'ilmi and amali, muta'allaq-bil-zahir and muta'allaq-bil-batin, muta'allaq-e-infradi and muta'allaq-e- ijtima'i, min hesial mu'amulat and min hesial mu'asharat, min hesial adat and akhlaq, are solely for radha-e-ilahi.

[That is, one's entire range of actions, connected to learning and teaching, theory and practice, connected to one's outer, external actions and one's internal character, connected to individual activity or collective activity, whether it be in the sphere of

transactions and social lifestyle, whether in the sphere of habits and character, should all be for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.]

Nothing else to remain or intrude between. This will result in your actions being fully within the boundaries of the orders of Allah Ta'ala, called the Shariat, in theory and practice, in instruction and compliance, whether connected to the zahir or batin, in a manner that is punctual and persistent.

Silently, for thirteen years the Sahabah(r.a.) progressed, developing firm, well-balanced characters, hand in hand with acquiring beneficial 'ilm. During this period they were not enjoined to perform any other ibadat (acts of worship). No order had come as yet to perform namaz (salat), to keep roza (fasts), to give zakat or to perform haj. These became compulsory only after the Hijrat, except for namaz, which became compulsory a year before the Hijrat. Yes, there were people performing haj, but this was done according to the ignorant customs then prevalent.

Do you understand the importance of all this?

Let us expand: It was only after the Hijrat, that a Markaz (Centre/Operational Headquarters) was acquired in Madina sharif. When obstacles were still being encountered in the matter of ta'lim of Deen, and outsiders persisted in harassing and obstructing the Ahle Deen Mu'min (i.e. the Muslims), then only was the order for jihad-e-amali given - the go ahead for jihad-e- amali came only after the Muslims possessed a markaz and had successfully passed the phase of jihad

against the nafs. Now, whatever the Sahabah(r.a.) did, was within the limits set by the Shariat, for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala and not for any personal motives.

Consequently, the full help and support of Allah Ta'ala was with them. Sukun (quietude) entered their hearts from one direction, and sakinah (tranquility) descended directly on them from Allah Ta'ala.

We can see that jihad was not ordered to force people to bring Iman: When obstacles were placed in front of them, the initiation of hostilities was permitted. Battle was also permitted when the enemy forced a direct confrontation - nay, in this situation it became not only ja'iz (permissible) but wajib (compulsory). Even the initiation of hostilities became wajib at times. At such times jihad would be in the category of fardh-e-kifayah, and in the category of fardh-e-'ain when there is a massed attack by the enemy.

6.TWO NECESSITIES FOR JIHAD

But when? Only when a markaz had been acquired. Thus, two important factors connected with jihad have been established: one is the acquisition of a markaz, and the second is the acquisition of taqwa (fear of Allah Ta'ala). To have a markaz is an 'illat (fundamental); to possess taqwa is a shart (stipulation). Mere possession of the shart, which is an external factor, does not make jihad fardh (compulsory).

These terms, 'illat and shart, will be better understood if explained in regard to namaz:

Verily, namaz has been prescribed upon Muslims at definite times. (S.4 A.103)

This command is the 'illat for performing namaz. Without this 'illat there is no namaz and no wudhu(ablution). Wudhی is an act outside namaz, but it is an essential prerequisite for performing namaz. Wudhu is a shart.

By adopting taqwa, sukun (tranquility) entered the hearts of the Muslims. By acquiring a markaz, a unique strength and sakinah (serenity) came to them from Allah Ta'ala. The sakinah that descended was from two sources: internally it entered their hearts through ilham (inspiration), and externally it came from assistance and support from mala'ikah (angels).

Support from outside, provided it is according to the Shariat, lends added strength.

The qissah of Hadhrat Musa (A.S.) illustrates this point quite nicely. When Allah Ta'ala ordered him to proceed to Egypt to speak to Fir'oun (to bring iman), Hadhrat Musa (A.S.) was hesitant. "Fir'oun is a harsh person. I am not liked by him because, accidentally, I killed one of his kinsman. On the one hand, I am unable to speak clearly (because of my stutter); on the other hand, the uncertainty of the situation causes me some anxiety. So, it would be much better if one from my own household, somebody in whom I have full confidence, who is my brother Harun, could be sent with me to lend support to me." Allah Ta'ala acceded to the request and sent Hadhrat Harun(A.S.) as a Nabi with him. This is an example of external support bringing sakinah.

External support bringing sakinah, may be through man and may also be through the agency of mala'ikah, as mentioned already.

For some sakinah and strength may also descend directly into the heart through ilham from Allah Ta'ala, without any outside means, thereby gaining strength of heart. An example of this latter method is also to be found in the Qur'an Sharif:

Then, after sorrow, He sent down unto you a security and slumber....(S.3 A.154)

In the middle of the Battle of Uhud, sakinah descended on the Sahabah(r.a.) and they were overcome by sleep. With this tranquility all their tiredness also left them and they felt light of heart.

7.THE IMPORTANCE OF 'ILM OVER JIHAD

We have stated already that the Shariat has stipulated the undertaking of jihad to remove the obstacles placed in propagating Islam. Jihad is very important. Everybody knows that. Nevertheless the importance of 'ilme Deen is such that all have been forbidden to go out in jihad all at once, but the command has been given that a group should remain behind in the presence of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) in order to learn 'ilme Deen.

The importance of the jihad of acquiring 'ilm in relation to physical jihad-e-amali is such that the latter (jihad-e-amali) is dependant on the former: if one does not have correct 'ilm, according to the Haq of the Shariat and the limits of the Shariat, what will be the state of one's jihad? It will definitely not be according to the wishes of Allah Ta'ala.

That is why Allah Ta'ala says: Do not go out all together, if it is not a situation of nafir-e-am (general hostilities). No, do not do such a thing. Rather a jama't (group) from amongst you should stay in your (Rasulullah(sallaahu alaiyhi wassallam's) presence to acquire 'ilm, while some should go out in jihad.

The elevated status and importance of acquiring 'ilm is being emphasised. Staying put in one place for the jihad of acquiring 'ilm is also a burden on the nafs - one is restricted, one's freedom is curtailed, one has to be punctual. This is a jihad against the nafs.

Allah Ta'ala then says: Those who return from jihad should now be taught by those who had remained behind in the royal court of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) what they had learnt. The word used is "fiqah" - the correct understanding: to be able to comprehend and explain. "Liyatafaqqahu fid din" - the plural used denotes that the students of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) are being addressed. One can see how a chain has formed. Starting from Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), 'ilm has been passed on to his students; his students have, in turn, become ustads (teachers.), and those returning are now the students, for 'ilm to be passed on to them.

8.MEANING OF 'ILM

Another point is that "knowledge" is clearly meant to be that of Deen. What is meant is that the finer points of the Deen should be taught and understood. "Fiqah" includes the power of deduction; it includes recognition of place, person and situation (moqah-mahel). Please note: "Lita'lamu" is not used because this would give a more limited meaning, namely "to teach". "Fiqah" implies that one should be imbued with such an understanding and fluency of the Deen academically that, if anyone were to launch an intellectual onslaught against you, you will not be overawed. In your propagation of the Haq you will reply in a calm and graceful manner. The setting forth of Haq will be done politely, with good manners, without

being subdued by the questioner, without being overwhelmed by him. Your response may be in reply to a query, or it may be in anticipation of any objections.

Ayyohat tullab! Hearken O ye students! This is called acquiring 'ilm! This is called studying! It is not done superficially. It is not merely skimming over the surface. Study should be in depth, with insight and foresight. The word "fiqah" encompasses all these aspects. That is why it is said:
One faqih is more burdensome on Shaitan than a thousand abeds (worshipers).

To mislead a thousand abeds is an easy task compared to misleading a single faqih.Here again the word "faqih" appears - that person who has a deep understanding of Deen, the finer and subtler points as well as the basics. Note that the term "muhaddith" - scholar of Hadith sharif - is not used.

A logical deduction is that if Shaitan himself was a faqih, he would not have been misled by his nafs. Shaitan had 'ilm, but he was not a faqih. His ustad (teacher) was Nafs, and that is why he was led astray. The temptation of hubbe jah (love of fame and prestige) was too great. His nafs was not disciplined by the process of tazkiyeh akhlaq (reformation of the character) and Shaitan, despite possessing 'ilm, succumbed.

9.THE QUALITIES OF A TAIBUL 'ILM

In this is a lesson for the talibul 'ilm, the ahle 'ilm (the students and the savants): what degree of tazkiyeh akhlaq has to be attained; the standard of the akhlaqe hamidah (praiseworthy qualities) to be firmly established. The akhlaqe razilah (despicable qualities) should be subdued to a point of non-existence and gaflat

(negligence) ceases completely, with yad-dasht (remembrance of Allah Ta'ala) becoming firmly grounded.

We are still dealing with the word "fiqah". The talibul 'ilm has the responsibility of acquiring 'ilm in depth, not mere superficial knowledge, but going into details and finer points; understanding and being able to convey to others (ifham wa tafhim). The inquiring mind of the talibul 'ilm should delve into deeper aspects; his perception should be profound; his answers should be erudite; his tabiyet (temperament) should be free, not overawed by others; his stance should be confident; his outlook should be all-encompassing. This is the manner in which he should set forth the Haq.

In the early years this emphasis on attaining knowledge caused an upsurge in all fields of study. The enemies of Islam - the enemies of 'ilme Deen - did not miss the opportunity. Using philosophical and pseudo-scientific arguments, they launched a headlong assault against the Deen. That is why always, but especially so in this day and age, the talibul 'ilm's knowledge cannot be cursory. He has to know the masa'il (rules) of Philosophy and the sciences of Logic and Astronomy.3 It is essential for the ustad to teach these to the student. This should be done in a simple manner, easy to comprehend, going into necessary details, so that the student may be armed for the onslaught by the enemy. These are subjects that should not be removed from the syllabus, as is the trend, unfortunately!

Not only nowadays, but in those days as well, philosophical and pseudo-scientific arguments were put to the Muslims, to confuse the simple-minded and lead them

astray. The kuffar tried to mislead the Sahabah(r.a.) with such arguments. An example of one such argument is the following:
"What kind of logic is it that the killing by Allah Ta'ala is haram, but killing by yourselves is halal?" This alludes to the fact that the meat of an animal dying through natural causes, in other words 'killed by Allah Ta'ala' is haram; but the meat of the animal slaughtered according to the method shown by the Shariat is halal. The kuffar and mushrikin would say, "Just see what your Rasul is saying. It does not make sense." Those Muslims who were naive and simple-minded became confused by this distorted logic.

Another attack would be made as follows: Referring to istinja, they would say, "What, does your Rasul even teach you to urinate and defecate?" In this sarcastic manner they tried to belittle the mission of Rasulullah (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam).

But, the Sahabah(r.a.) were firm and undaunted. They replied with serenity, "Yes, he does! Before our becoming Muslims we never even knew how to urinate and defecate! Yes, he does teach us these!"

The simple fact is that to make istinja in the correct manner, according to the laws of the Shariat, is also counted as ibadat (worship). To get one's perspective straight, let me add that istinja, performed according to the Haq of the Shariat and the laws of the Shariat, far outweighs a thousand episodes of kashf and a thousand acts of karamats in attaining qurbe-Ilahi (nearness to Allah Ta'ala). Please understand this well! The qurbe-Ilahi and the status attained by the ibadat of istinja performed in

the proper and correct Shari manner, are far, far greater than thousands of episodes of kashf and karamats. The latter, in relation to the former, are valueless.

To continue: simple-minded Muslims, those newly entered into the fold of Islam, were easily confused. And in this day and age the distorted logic and philosophical and pseudo-scientific arguments directed at the Muslims have increased manifold. The enemies of 'ilme Deen are very active. Their aim is to mislead the uninformed.

It is amazing that on that side (among the non-Muslims) there is a tremendous upsurge and spread of knowledge, whereas we are limiting it. This is a great weakness on our part.

The question of acquiring only superficial knowledge does not arise at all! The importance of correct 'ilm - 'ilm being knowledge of Deen - cannot be emphasized enough. At all times the value of 'ilm relative to jihad must be borne in mind to appreciate its importance.

Suffah.[A raised platform.] ("Sufi" is related to this word.) This place is still in existence today since the time of the Sahabah(r.a.). In the Masjid-e-Nabawi in Madina you will see a raised platform on which you will find people sitting and reciting (making tilawat of) the Qur'an Sharif. This is where the talibul 'ilm - the Sahabah(r.a.), the As-habas-Suffah - used to lodge in the time of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). They used to gather there. Besides the acquisition of 'ilme Deen they had no other work

10.THE MADRASAH - SOME IMPORTANT POINTS

Before proceeding, let us digress a little to the subject of the gathering (ijtimayet)

of students (in an institution for them to study, i.e. a madrasah): The As-habas-Suffah present a precedent for providing boarding facilities at a madrasah for the students. The madrasah is established for the teaching of Deen. It should thus accommodate those who have come to learn, by providing food as well as shelter. Even students from the neighbourhood should stay at the madrasah's boarding, and not in their own homes. The discipline of staying collectively with others - ijtimayet - in the "Boarding", as well as the punctuality at lessons, consistency in studies, ease at revision, time saved in travel, are features not to be attained by students staying in their own homes. The supervision here over their studies is achieved with ease.

In my young days how did I not undertake the supervision of the students! I used to pitch up at any time - sometimes after Maghrib, sometimes after 'Isha, sometimes before Fajr, sometimes after Fajr. Chacha-Mia4 is sitting here - ask him.

Teachers - the mudarrisin - should similarly reside on the premises. If they stayed in the neighbourhood it will take them approximately ten minutes to get to their classes. But if they stayed on the premises they would be at their classes almost immediately. If finances allow, the houses of the mudarrisin should also be built on the premises.

These topics are mentioned incidentally.

11.THE AS-HABAS-SUFFAH

Coming back to the Suffah: The Sahabah(r.a.) resided here to acquire 'ilm. They

were so engrossed in this task that food was of secondary importance to them. If food was available, well and good; if not, no matter. What did Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (r.a.)say? (He was also one of the As-habas-Suffah.) "I should feel faint and collapse at times. People thought that the Jinn had got hold of me and, in that age of Ignorance, they used to pull my ears to 'cure' me! The simple truth was that I used to faint through lack of adequate food!"

Nowadays, despite being provided for, students still complain. This is a far cry from the dignity and majesty (shan) that students (talaba) should have. The demands of 'ilm are various, one of which is to have hilm (forbearance). Talaba are expected to develop hilm in their quest for 'ilm. They should not be full of complaints, nor should they quarrel and fight amongst themselves.

12.IKHTILAAF - DIFFERENCES OF OPINION

Hadhratwala did point out in his wa'z (lecture) that ikhtilaf (differences of opinion) are bound to occur. Where do differences in viewpoint not exist? With ikhtilaf one can even expect khilaf (opposition). Ikhtilaf existed even between ustad and pupil - between Imam Abu Hanifah and his pupil, Imam Yusuf . Those were days of ijtihad, yet there was room for ikhtilaf. Ikhtilaf was in umur-e-intizamiah (matters of administration) but not in mazhab (school of thought). There is still room for ijtihad in umur-e-intizamiah, even though the doors are closed as far as ijtihad in fiqh is concerned. With differences in opinion, there were also opposing stances, but never quarrels and disputes. The attitude adopted was: "You have understood it that way; we have understood it this way." And there the matter rested, without disputes.

But do disputes not exist amongst others? Definitely they do: doctors dispute among themselves, and so do lawyers, judges and administrators.

What a fine qissah (incident) was not related by Hadhratwala in the wa'z read yesterday, involving Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) and Qazi Shureh! What an important mas'alah on ikhtilaf it demonstrated! Ofo! On the one hand was Hadhrat Ali (r.a.), a Jannati, one of the Asharah-Mubasharah - those who were given the glad tidings of Jannat while in this world! His intelligence was a by-word, his 'ilm second to none: Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) was the one to be summoned to reply to questions posed by delegations coming to Madina from outside. His mental agility was superb; his capabilities in arithmetical calculations were outstanding.

Should anybody have asked Qazi Shureh whether Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) was truthful in his claim or not, Qazi Shureh would unhesitatingly have taken qassam (an oath) that he was truthful. "But," Qazi Shureh would have said, "I am helpless in the matter: It is a question of mu'amalah and huquqs (dealings and rights), which have to be according to the Haq of the Shariat and the limits of the Shariat, in accordance with the evidence produced. I, personally, have no choice in the matter. My decision will be based on the criteria above. My opinion is that the evidence of a child in favour of the parent is invalid."

Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) did not challenge this opinion. He did not state that he had proof that a child could give evidence in favour of the parent. If he did not have such proof, why would he have brought his son forward? It should be remembered that Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) was the Khalifah of the Islamic State at the time and, as such, he

was Qazi Shureh's superior. Did he remove Qazi Shureh from his post? Of course not! He happily accepted the decision of the Qazi as final. He was not even upset. Neither did he pass any comment on the merit of the decision.

In relating this excellent incident, Hadhratwala remarked that this is the attitude the Ulema should have. Ulema should neither dispute nor quarrel nor get involved in altercations like the common people. This only gives the man in the street an opportunity to ridicule the Ulema.

13.ULEMA OF OLD AND US

Question: If the ta'lim is the same, what is the difference between the Ulema of old and us?

Answer: They had ta'lim combined with a composite good character; whereas we have mere ta'lim without tarbiyet, without having developed a good, well-balanced, congenial character. We have learning without a training in character development, without the akhlaq-e-mahmudah hasanah (the praiseworthy qualities) being well grounded, without fana (annihilation) of the nafs. They had fana of the nafs - they took no offence.

Further on, see the hoslah (wisdom) of Hadhrat Ali (r.a.). When the Yahud admitted that the armour did belong to him and wished to return it, Hadhrat Ali (r.a.) responded by presenting the armour to the Yahud as a gift!

Let us summarize the lessons to be learnt from this incident:

- 'ilm and hilm (forbearance) should go hand in hand.
- Not to dispute.

- Not to take offence when one's opinion is rejected in favour of an opinion that is contrary.
- Hoslah in dealings. Other words for hoslah are farzan and mardan (sagacity/ wisdom/ heroism). These are lessons for the student - just as hilm (forbearance) goes with 'ilm, similarly hoslah also goes with 'ilm.

All this is mentioned incidentally, to demonstrate the shan (high and noble status) of 'ilm - the honour, dignity and majesty to be accorded to 'ilme Deen and the institution where 'ilme Deen is taught, i.e. the madrasah. It is imperative to maintain this shan.

The madrasah is a basic institution. In our lectures, in the talks from the mimbar, the madrasah is referred to as our fortress, as our mahafiz khanah - it is the backbone of our Deen.

14.THE NEED FOR KITABS

It is interesting to note that the Hadith sharif referred to earlier use the words "talibul/ utlubul 'ilme" and not "talibul/ utlubul kutub". The initial teaching of Deen was without kitabs (books). The capability to memorise was amazing in the early days: on listening to a hundred-verse qasidah5 just once, the listener would be able to repeat it word for word! But, as the Muslims went into decline and enthusiasm waned and memories were not as keen as before, it became necessary to adopt the written word as an aid to teaching.

Again: What kitabs were in front of the Sahabah(r.a.)? Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) used to speak and the Sahabah(r.a.) used to listen. Their

memories were excellent. They were enthusiastic. They took care in revising what they had learnt and enquired from each other on what they had missed out. This is the original and correct method of ta'lim.

This is the manner in which the Deen has reached us - initially without kitabs but, later, through kitabs and formal lessons in the madrasah. For reasons already mentioned, it became impossible to teach without kitabs and, more so in this day and age, kitabs have become fundamental in ta'lim; and the madrasah must have prescribed textbooks in its syllabus.

The emphasis in the madrasah is on the important task of ta'lim. - this is the shan of the madrasah. With this concentration on academic learning there is no equivalent emphasis on practical aspects - there is little inclination towards tarbiyet (character training).

15.THE ROLE OF THE KHANQAH

Let us now proceed in another direction, towards that place that is called the khanqah. The khanqah is not khamkha (nonsensical)! It has its place: the concentration here is on the important aspect of tarbiyet. Great, great Ulema have spent lengthy periods in the khanqah, after graduating from the madrasah, to benefit from the shan that tarbiyet offers.

Incidentally, it is an unfair criticism for the madrasah to level at the khanqah and say that the real khanqah was the one that existed in those days, when there were proper murabbi - those making tarbiyet of others - so that it was worthwhile for the madrasah student to spend some time there. Where are murabbi of that quality

nowadays? If this argument is valid, then the appropriate retort from the khanqah is: Where are the tutors in the darsgah (tutorial room) like the tutors of the past? Are there any tutors like Maulanas Gangohi sahib, Qasim sahib, Yacub sahib and Thanwi sahib? If the khanqah lacks murabbi like those in the past, similarly the present day darsgah lacks the tutors of the past. If you abandon residence at the khanqah then, logically, abandon tutorials in the darsgah as well! If you are not prepared to abandon these tutorials, why do you dissuade others from attending the khanqah? Why do you place criticisms and objections in front of others and discourage them? Why make statements such as, "Staying in the khanqah is a waste of time!"?

Do you understand, or not yet?

In this age of our decline, just as the present tutors suffice, similarly you will find in the khanqah that sheikh who is capable of making the tarbiyet of others. No age is desolate - zamanah khali nahi. If you abandon the one, abandon the other as well. If you do not abandon the one, there is no question of abandoning the other! This is khida (deception).

To continue: The emphasis in the darsgah is on ta'lim, and the approach is through tutorials. In the khanqah the emphasis is on tarbiyet, by tackling akhlaq. Comparatively, akhlaq takes priority, as seen by the fact that the thirteen years of the Makkah-Period were spent in building character; and a good character is impossible without proper tazkiyah (purification) of the nafs.

This process is not possible unless the person does not attach himself to the masha'ikh and the khanqah. Together with tarbiyet, the masha'ikh will also give ta'lim to the talib (seeker) - [In our context this is that person who seeks the closeness of Allah Ta'ala. This involves a process of self-rectification, called islah].

Allah Ta'ala states:
And keep yourself steadfast with those who call out to their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His Countenance. (S.18. }.28)
The meaning is that you (Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam)) should sit firmly with those who are talib. Set aside one such time as to sit closely with them, with steadfastness. After all, they are sincere in their quest. This is an indication that the sheikh should have one such period when he comes out to sit with the talibin, who should gather around, as the Sahabah(r.a.) used to do.

At such times the talk of the sheikh is not only on tarbiyet, but in order to achieve tarbiyet he also gives ta'lim - the ta'lim is to put the theory of tarbiyet into actual practice whilst in the khanqah: "Make zikr in this fashion; make muraqabah (meditate) in this manner; make shaghl (specific spiritual exercises) in this way. Do all these at this or that particular level. Adopt taqwa in this way."

Each talib has gathered for tazkiyah akhlaq - to cure the nafs of the illnesses affecting it, to embellish the heart with spiritual effulgence. Each one's level of taqwa is different. Each one's illness is different. Therefore, each one's prescription and each one's restrictions (parhez) will differ, tailored to each one's personal needs.

Let us compare this to the tutorial in the darsgah: The tutor takes the kitabs "Shar-e Wiqayah", "Hidayah", etc., and gives a lesson from the chapter "Kitabut Taharat". The lesson does not merely state how istinja should be performed. The tutorial will go into other details - there will be a section on usable water; how to recognize pak (pure) water from appearance, smell and taste; what water is pak; what water is na-pak (impure); how to make na-pak water pak. You will notice that, though the chapter is on taharat (purification), the discussion must flow into several different channels. This is necessary in order for the talib of zahiri taharat (external purity) to achieve his objective of taharat in whatever situation he may find himself.

Similarly, the talib attending the majlis is a talib of batini taharat (inner purity). He has presented himself to sort out all the different problems that he encounters. The talk of the sheikh will be varied. Sometimes he relates some waqi'ah or hikayet (incident or detail). This methodology is also used in the Qur'an Sharif and Hadith sharif. At times there may be tartib (methodology); at times targib (persuasion); at times tahdhidh (prodding). The topics may also vary: the discussion may be on kibr (arrogance), or it may drift to hasd (jealousy), to qana't (contentment), to ikhlas (sincerity), etc. If these discussions are not 'ilmi then what are they?

The majlis of the sheikh is thus an 'ilmi tutorial without the aid of any textbook, providing both ta'lim and tarbiyet. Masa'il (laws/ regulations) may not be listed in that much detail, but sufficient detail is provided for the needs of talib of tarbiyet. And the subjects are those discussed in the darsgah, taken from Qur'an Sharif Hadith sharif:

Do not be jealous one of the other.

Do not have animosity one for the other.

Do not backbite. (S.49 A.12)

Verily, Allah loveth not any vainglorious boaster. (S.31 A.18)

These subjects are obviously related to purity of the batin and not to physical taharat. This is the khanqah - that place where one can purify one's batin, with the appropriate ta'lim to enable correct tarbiyet.

In summary: Tarjumah, tafsil and m'ani zahiryah (translation, details and external meanings) will be dealt with in the tutorials of the madrasah darsgah; whereas the intibaqi tariq (method of application), with the necessary ta'lim for tarbiyet, will be dealt with in the khanqah. In other words, academic knowledge will be a acquired in the madrasah, but the practical application of that knowledge will take place in the khanqah: Scrutiny and evaluation over here. Inspection and stock-taking over here in a khanqah. This is what the khanqah is for.

16.MUHASABAH - STOCK-TAKING

This Hadith sharif states that one should take stock of oneself, take account of one's activities, before this is done for one on the day of Qiyamat. Everybody knows what will transpire on that day in front of Allah Ta'ala, when rewards will be according to one's deeds. Another role of the sheikh as a muhtasib (evaluator) is indicated in this Hadith sharif: he evaluates the talib and he also gives ta'lim on the method of taking hisab. When and how, are explained to each individual according to each person's requirements.

17.ZIKR

The sheikh gives ta'lim on zikr. The Qur'an Sharif commands us to be in constant zikr, which is an objective in itself:

Then remember Allah, standing and sitting and lying on your sides. (S.4. }.103)

The ta'lim of the sheikh attempts to establish constant zikr in the talib. In addition, the sheikh shows the methods of producing a special effect in the heart, one of fervour, passion and yearning (zouqi and shouqi). The method shown differs with each individual - the manner in which zikr should be done; the time during the day and night most beneficial; the quantity of the zikr at any one time. With regards to the quantity of zikr the sheikh will further look at factors like the free time, strength and courage of the talib.

Ta'lim is also given on the loudness of zikr:

And remember your Rabb within yourself. (S.7. A. 205)

One person will be advised to make zikr silently; another will be told to raise his voice slightly; and the third would be instructed to make the zikr a bit louder still. Again, according to the requirements of the moment and the individual.

This is all part of the ta'lim of the khanqah. All this is within the boundaries set by the Shariat, whether it is asghal, azkar or muraqabat, as seen by the Qur'an Sharif ayat stated above. Whatever ta'lim the sheikh gives is within the bounds of the Shariat. Methods may differ, but a change in the tone does not change the reality.

It is to be emphasised that the tarbiyet and the intibaqiyet (character training and applications) of the khanqah are the very lessons studied in the darsgah. Change in terminology does not change the reality behind a particular item.

Let us proceed further: you should know by now that the life of a mu'min is at no time free of ibadat. This was also stated in Hadhratwala's (R.A.) wa'z yesterday and it is something we all accept without argument. The Qur'an Sharif states:
And I have not created the Jinn and Mankind but they should worship Me. (S.51 }.56)

But, there is something more to it: what is the command given in regard to the manner of ibadat? Answer: with muraqabah. In other words, a mu'min's whole life is never free of ibadat with muraqabah.

18.MURAQABAH

What is the substantiating the proof of this? It is the following: a long narration, called Hadith-e-Jibril (a.s.) which records the questions posed to Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) by Hadhrat Jibril (a.s.) and the answers given. After asking, "Min al-Iman (What is ¯man)?" and receiving a reply, he asked, "Min al-Islam (What is Islam)?" After receiving the appropriate reply, he posed a third question, "Min al-Ihsan (What is Ihsan)?" Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) gave the following reply:

Note that the word "an ta'budu" (that you make ibadat) is used and not the word "an tusalli" (that you perform namaz). Neither are the words "an tusumo" (that you keep roza), "an tuhajju" (that you perform haj) used.

No! Quite clearly the words are: "an ta'budullah ka annaka tarahu..."- "that you make ibadat of Allah Ta'ala as if you are seeing Him. And, if you are able to see him, never mind, your faith and belief (i'tiqad) is that Allah Ta'ala is hadhir-nazir (Omnipresent): thus your ibadat should be such that you are aware that He is seeing you!" "...fa innakayarake." (... for He is seeing you.) Comparatively, it is easier to bear in mind that He is watching you.
Therefore, the awareness of the fact that Allah Ta'ala is seeing you (yad) should be firmly established. At no time should this awareness be absent. This only comes with constant reminder - the moment one forgets, remind oneself; again, if one forgets, remind oneself; and again, and again! Slowly, degree by degree, a stage will be reached when there will be constant remembrance (yad). In Sufi terminology, this is the stage called "malake yad dasht", where the heart is said to have become muzakkir.

Let us put it altogether again: from the previous ayet of the Qur'an Sharif we come to know that the mu'min's sole duty is to make the ibadat of Allah Ta'ala. In other words, no action of a mu'min is free of ibadat. In the above Hadith sharif the mu'min has been ordered to ensure that his ibadat has the quality of "ihsan" - that is, the muraqabah that Allah Ta'ala is watching him. Placing these two together we can safely state that every act and deed of a mu'min-bandah, his every moment, should be ibadat with muraqabah ihsan.

This explains muraqabah - the thought and contemplation that Allah Ta'ala is watching me. Is this contrary to the Shariat? Obviously not! This is directly from Hadith sharif.

We now come back to zikr. The Qur'an Sharif has numerous ayat commanding zikr. Two such ayat have just been quoted above. A zakir (one making zikr) is not necessarily that person reciting with his tongue the Kalimah sharif or Durیd sharif or tasbihat, but a zakir is every such person who is acting in obedience to the orders of Allah Ta'ala, submitting himself to Him, with His yad in his heart and his work (whatever it may be) falls under the Laws of Allah Ta'ala, every such person is a zakir.

This is supported by the following Hadith sharif, taken from Hasne Hasin:
Every obedient servant of Allah is a zakir.

One can go even further: Take it that, for a short duration while he is concentrating on his work, the thought of Allah Ta'ala is not even in his heart. Yet, the work he is doing is performed as an act of obedience, in accordance with the laws of Allah Ta'ala. In this situation he is still a zakir!

For example: the husband approaches his wife, in obedience to the command of Allah Ta'ala, he is in zikr. During the act his tongue is not engaged in zikr, yet he is in zikr. The proviso, of course, is that there is ita'ate kamilah - complete and perfect obedience.

Out of the three specific items that the sheikh gives training on - namely ashghal, azkar and muraqabah - muraqabah and zikr have been explained with supporting proof from Qur'an Sharif and Hadith sharif. This brings us to the third item, shaghl (pl. ashghal).

19.SHAGHL

By definition, shaghl is to fix one's eyes on and stare at any one object, in order to bring a special benefit. There should not be even a flicker of an eyelid. And, at the same time, the heart must be kept engaged in the yad of Allah Ta'ala.

This is the desired state one should be in during namaz. When one is standing in qiyam, one's gaze should be fixed at the spot where one's forehead is going to touch the ground in sajdah (prostration). Or, should one be peeping here and then, allowing all kinds of thoughts to enter one's heart? Obviously not.

Staring with a fixed gaze at one spot has the effect of warding off stray thoughts and aiding concentration. Instead of wandering hither and thither, one's thoughts will be controlled and one's concentration will improve.

And may Allah Ta'ala bless Imam Abu Hanifah - and very much so! Why? In the situation when one is out in the countryside and it is time for namaz, Imam Abu Hanifah states that one should place a sutrah6 in front of one when standing up for namaz. This is to prevent passers-by from walking directly in front of you - they will walk around the sutrah. If you do not possess a sutrah, not even a stick to place in front of you, Imam Abu Hanifah(R.A.) states that one should draw a line in the sand at that point where one is going to make sajdah. Once again, may Allah Ta'ala bless Imam sahib - he was a great Sufi. Not only Imam Abu Hanifah but all the Imams were great Sufis.

If somebody were to ask Imam sahib , "Why draw a line? Passers-by will not notice the line, so of what benefit is it?" his answer would be, "It is of benefit to the

mussalli - the one making namaz. His gaze can fix on the line and he can concentrate. There will be no dispersal of thoughts." Passers-by will not benefit, but the mussalli (the one performing the salat) will have achieved the object of warding off stray thoughts and thereby concentrating on his namaz. Imam sahib has given ta'lim on shaghl.

All three items discussed are to be found in namaz: Namaz is zikr from beginning to end; muraqabah is a state throughout; and shaghl is prescribed at every rukun (phase of the salat), from the beginning when "Allahu-akbar" is recited till the final ending of "Assalamu-alaikum-wa-rahmatullah." These essential items are taught by the sheikh in the khanqah, ikmalin and itmamim - in supreme perfection. This is the khanqah, the place where ta'lim and tarbiyet are to be found to the degree of ikmalin and itmamim.

But for whom? For the talibe mukhlis - the seeker who is sincere. For the talib who is mukhlis and saccha - sincere and honest.

20.MUNAFIQUN

Why this stress? Because all types come to the khanqah. There were munafiqin (hypocrites) in the time of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). Various munafiqin, big and small, attended his court even. So why be amazed at the presence of such in the khanqah? The ones to benefit, however, are those who are mukhlis and saccha -these are the real talib. If you see the other type in attendance, why blame the khanqah? What fault is it of the khanqah?

There were munafiqin sitting on the Suffah itself; there were munafiqin around Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam); munafiqin were even found to be present among those writing down wahi even though this figure was absolutely small. This was the situation in the early period, that of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and of the Khulafa- e-Rashidin. This situation did not improve as time went on and the era of decline set in. If some insincere ones find their way to the khanqah in this age, why should this affect the khanqah or the talibul-'ilm?

If one were to apply the same scrutiny to the darsgah, one will find even more such insincere ones in the madrasah. One will find very few students attending to their studies in the correct manner; being completely punctual in attendance; paying full attention to the tutor during lessons, without a moment's distraction even; learning with ifham and tafhim (in-depth understanding), with ikmal and itmam (utmost perfection); aiming to gain full mastery of the subjects. The majority of the students will be otherwise, especially nowadays. If the khanqah has two to four such insincere ones, what are their numbers in the madrasah? Even more! If this is the situation in the madrasah, with the talibe sadiq in the minority, must one close the madrasah..?

Do you understand? It is very necessary to discuss these issues. Allah Ta'ala has caused these thoughts to intrude and issue forth and be presented to you. This is an assessment of the current situation, an insight into the times.

If there is no need for the khanqah, then equally there is no need for the madrasah. If there is a need for the madrasah - the need is there and the need is great! - then there is need for the khanqah as well, to an even greater extent in this age.

Before, both student and tutor were of a different calibre. The tutor had the qualities of a sheikh and the student used to be a talibe sadiq, one with taharat and taqwa. Despite (or, because of?) these excellent qualities they still attended the khanqah.

21.TAQWA - A QISSAH

Take Maulana Muzaffar Husain sahib. (His qissah comes to mind at the moment, though there are numerous other qissas.) He was a resident of Kandlah. His generation was just before that of Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi and Maulana Muhammed Qasim Nanotwi - the latter two were still in their youth at the time that Maulana Muzaffar Husain had attained old age. Anyhow, while still young, he had gone to complete his studies by Shah Muhammed Ishaq sahib in Delhi. At the time, he had already completed courses in Persian and a few other kitabs and he was already conversant with all the fiqhi masa'il.

He arrived in Delhi and presented himself at the house of Shah Muhammed Ishaq sahib . Mealtime came and he was served with dhal and roti. He ate the roti but not the dhal.

When the dishes went back to the kitchen, Shah sahib's wife noticed the uneaten dhal. "Ofo! What kind of youngster is this? He ate the roti, but not the dhal. Does

he want to be served meat everyday?" She commented drily. Shah sahib said, "I will go and find out."

Investigate first. It is not correct to cast aspersions on anybody without first investigating and finding of the facts.

Shah sahib went. "My lad, you did not eat the dhal. Are you on some kind of diet? You ate the roti but not the dhal."

"Hadhrat, my heart did not desire it."

"No, no. I insist. Tell me the real reason."

"Hadhrat, the fact is that I detected that some sour mangoes had been added to the dhal, that is why I did not eat it."

At this point it must be explained that mostly the sale of mango crops in those days was the same as is present in many areas these days. The farmer sells the fruit crop before the appearance of the mango on the tree. Selling an unknown item is an illegal transaction - be'i-batil. Whoever buys that mango does not become legal owner after a be'i-batil.

Do you see his insight and taqwa? Yet, he had only gone to study! That was a wondrous age.

Shah sahib was wonder struck. "My thoughts did not even focus on this aspect!" He went inside and told the wife, "Allah Ta'ala has sent a mala'ikah to us for our islah!"

It does happen at times that certain matters have such fine points that these details escape the attention of many a learned person. When a junior points out something which is correct and haq (truth), it beholds the seniors to take note and accept. This is the attitude adopted by our akabir (pious elders). Shah sahib had no hesitation in accepting the correct observation and attitude of the student. He said, "No mangoes are to be bought from the bazar in future until it has not been ascertained from which orchard they came - whether they came from an orchard where the fruit has been sold after the appearance of the crop or before its appearance."

That age of the talib 'ilm was such then - and nowadays it is such that using tawil (re-interpretation) many matters are made ja'iz (permissible).

This qissah also emphasises, once again, the importance of 'ilm, the great need for 'ilm and the madaris. 'Ilm is the foundation of all our deeds. Then can be no 'amal (deed) without 'ilm and any 'amal without 'ilm is not qabیl - that deed is not accepted.

22.ILM & JIHAD: A COMPARISON

The importance of 'ilm has already been discussed. The ayet quoted earlier, pointing out the importance of 'ilm in relation to jihad, has been brought to your notice already, that when the order for jihad is there, do not all go out in jihad but some should remain in the company of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam); and, when those who had gone out in jihad return, give them ta'lim - teach them what you have learnt, that 'ilm that you had attained, convey to them.

Despite this strong stress on 'ilm, the emphasis on the importance of 'ilm has been increased to a higher degree by Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) in the following Hadith sharif:

Whosoever sets out to seek 'ilm is in the Path of Allah until he returns.

"Fi sabilillah"-" In the path of Allah"- is to be in jihad. This is the accepted meaning, as seen in other instances in the Qur'an Sharif. And this phrase Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) has applied to the talib of 'ilm. That person who has left his home to acquire 'ilm, he is in the path of Allah Ta'ala; he is in jihad. In other words, the talib of 'ilm is of the mujahidin - he is of those waging jihad.

23.THE FOUR TRIALS IN JIHAD

The obvious question is: With whom is the talibul 'i1m making jihad?

The answer is: With his nafs.

The mufassirin (authentic commentators of the Qur'an Sharif) have written lengthy commentaries on this Hadith sharif. You are advised to read them.

Let us summarize their findings:

What are the trials facing the mujahidin?

ONE: I'la'e Deen, also called I'la'e Kalimatullah - to uphold the Deen (or Kalimah of Allah Ta'ala). Jihad is not for territorial gain and aggrandizement. Jihad is for the sake of Deen - the purpose is to enable those who have the Deen to practise Deen properly by removing the obstacles that others had placed in their path; also, to stop the torment that others are inflicting on them. This is the first point in jihad - I'la'e Deen.

The purpose of attaining 'ilm is the same: namely I'la'e Deen. There is no other purpose except to uphold the Deen.

TWO: The second point is izlale Shayatin - to disgrace and humiliate Shaitan, to weaken him. This also applies to the acquisition of 'ilme Deen.

I am sure you are aware of the Hadith sharif that describes Shaitan seating himself on his throne (takht) on the sea when evening approaches...

24.KARAMAT & ISTIDRAJ

Incidentally, this amazing feat of Shaitan is not termed a "karamat" (miracle) but "istidraj" (deception). Any feat that appears to be supernatural or wondrous, shown by one not following the Shariat, cannot be termed a "karamat". It is "istidraj" and a trap for the unwary - a trick to lead them astray. Shaitan, as we all know, is the head of the kuffar - his kufr is the greatest - yet he has the capability of manifesting this amazing feat of setting his takht on the sea and gathering all his fellow-shayatin on it. Despite being weighty, the takht does not sink into the sea. This is "istidraj" which Allah Ta'ala sets forth as a test. This is mentioned by-the-way, to warn the unwary not to be hoodwinked by those disobedient to Allah Ta'ala.

To continue: When evening approaches, Shaitan spreads his takht on the sea and seats himself on it. His off-spring - fellow Shayatin - who had been roaming around since the morning spreading their evil, return to give their reports. Shaitan listens to all and comments indifferently and impatiently at each one's report and responds: "Yes, yes. Well done. Yes, yes. Well done." Then one gets up, and says, "Listen to my report. Today I created friction between husband and wife, with the result that both flew into a rage - gussah got hold of them."

It comes in the Hadith sharif that if anyone is overcome with gussah at the time that something goes against his temperament (tabiyet), in appearance he is a human being, but in reality he is a beast, and he has approached the edge of Jahannam - a slight push and he is inside!

The little Shaitan continues: "Having caused them to fly into a fit of rage, I goaded them on till a stage was reached where the husband gave the wife three tallaqs (a divorce)." At hearing this, Shaitan (senior) stands up in happiness and comes to pat the other Shaitan on his back. "Shabash! Shabash! You have really done a great piece of work! Shabash! Bravo!" Shaitan seats himself again.

Finally another Shaitan stands up. "Listen to me as well!" The big Shaitan: "What do you wish to say?" This Shaitan: "A talibul 'ilm was going for classes. I tackled him. I whispered first one thing then another to him, until I managed to stop him from proceeding to his class. I managed to get him to put his satchel down and got him involved in playing games. In this way I prevented him from proceeding to acquire 'ilme Deen." The big Shaitan again stands up in sheer joy. He comes and pats this Shaitan on his back and then clasps him joyfully to his breast. "Shabash! Shabash!" he cries exultantly.

Why did the big Shaitan joyfully clasp the other Shaitan to his breast? He reason is that he feels greatly offended at a anybody attaining 'ilm of Deen. So to say he thinks as follows, "There is disgrace in this for me. When that child grows up he may become an alim (scholar) of the Deen, a faqih (one who has correct and in-depth knowledge of the Deen).How many sinners will he not bring back to the

Straight Path! He will burden me like a mountain! He will be an obstruction in my scheming and istidraj."

That is why it comes in the Hadith sharif:
A single faqih is harder on Shaitan than a thousand abeds (worshipers).

We have thus proved point number two, that a talibul 'ilm acquiring 'ilme Deen is a direct cause of izlale Shayatin - disgrace and humiliation of Shaitan - to a complete degree.

The THIRD point: The mujahid (the person waging jihad) is involved in itti'abe nafs - putting the nafs in ta'ab and mushaqqat - placing the nafs under stress and involving it in toil and effort. The mujahid combating the kuffar is exerting himself physically and he is under great pressure. The talibul 'ilm is also involved in itti'abe nafs - he has left home and all the comforts that the home provides in order to attain 'ilm. Where is the luxury of home food and refreshing drinks, of rest and ease? This is itti'abe nafs, so that the talibul 'ilm is in jihad because of itti'abe nafs.

The FOURTH point is kasre nafs. "Kasr" means "to break".7 This is the breaking of nafsani desires - breaking the lusts and passions of the carnal self. The eyes desire to roam hither and thither; the tongue wishes to speak uninhibitedly; the ears yearn to listen to what it should not. The tabiyet (temperament) has to be restrained from all these desires of the nafs. To tire out the nafs with toil and effort is part of mujahadah. To break the nafs by restraint and discipline is riyadhat. For example: The nafs wishes to sleep a full eight hours, but in reality the talibul 'ilm allows himself only three to four hours of sleep. In jihad as well there is kasre nafs. Does

not the enemy send beautiful women to tempt the mujahidin? Our history bears testimony to how the Nasara sent beautifully adorned women to try and seduce the mujahidin, how tempting goods and wealth were spread in front of them along the roads to make them victims of lust and greed. But, what did the Nasara find? Thirteen years of training the nafs had produced men of akhlaq - disciplined characters. Gold and jewels meant nothing to them. Graceful and beautiful maidens were completely ignored! These, then, are the trials that those out in jihad come across. These are the very trials that face the talibul 'ilm. That is why, as stated previously, the Hadith sharif states:

Whosoever goes out to seek 'ilm is in the Path of Allah until he returns.

The person referred to is the talibul 'ilm - that student who has a talab for 'ilme Deen. The word "talab" appears in the Hadith sharif. The key-word is "talab", meaning "producing a taqadha". The word "taqadha", in turn, is an inner state of disquiet that exists at not having attained one's objective; a state of unease that does not disappear until and unless one's objective is acquired. This is also called a "hal" (condition/ state) in the terminology of the Sufis. The talab has been created within the student to attain 'ilm; a hal has been created within him for 'ilm. One simple example of such a hal is real hunger, which causes a state of unease that disappears only on satisfying that hunger.

Do you understand, ayyuhat tullab (O ye students!), my dear brothers, my dear buzurgs?

Ayyuhat tullab! The talibul 'ilm has set out with the talab of 'ilm. This is the talab, the taqadha, that the student should have, that until he has not attained his objective, he is not at ease. The motivation and desire (taqadha) should be so great that he does not make friends with others; he does not sit here and there involving himself in useless and superfluous talks and activities (la-yani-o-lahu). He discards all these in his talab and taqadha of 'ilm. He is at ease only after having prepared his lesson. He is punctual in his attendance; he listens attentively to the tutor; he then revises what he has been lectured on. If he misses out on anything he is filled with regret. This is the talibul 'ilm.

My dear brothers, my dear buzurgs! This is the meaning of talab! Talab is one thing and kasb (acquisition) is another. The word used in the Hadith sharif is talab and not mere accusation (kasb). Maulana Rumi puts it as follows:

A talib should have an extreme degree of forbearance and tolerance;
I have never heard of an alchemist sitting back in defeat.

What Maulana Rumi is saying is: I have not have heard of one desirous of Dunya (a materialist) sitting down, tired and dejected. 0 you desirous of Deen, shame on yourselves that you are just the opposite! Just look around you at those involved in worldly activities - they do not rest until their objectives are achieved.

So, the one desirous of Deen (talabgar) should be "bayad sabur- o-hamul" - tolerant and forbearing, having a hold on his tabiyet, exercising great self restraint when he encounters anything against his temperament. Note that the words "sabur-o-hamul" is used, not just "sabar" and "hamil"- not merely showing patience, but exercising

immense tolerance and forbearance. If anybody swears at him, he simply ignores the abuse. If anybody slaps him, he takes no notice. If somebody upsets him, he does not flare up. This is the talibul 'ilm - the one so desirous of 'ilm that he does not rest until his objective is attained. How can he flare up in anger?

We have shown that in the correct context all the thawab (Divine reward) that the mujahid accumulates, also accrues to the talibul 'ilm; all the fadha'il (virtues) that apply to the mujahid, also apply to the talibul 'ilm. In the correct meaning, the talibul 'ilm is the personification (misdaq) of the fadha'il of jihad - the talibul 'ilm is the authoritative claimant of the virtues listed for waging jihad.

Remember it well that today you have come to know the reality of 'ilm: how high and noble 'ilm is, how high is the status of 'ilm.

25.EVERY OBEDIENT SERVANT OF ALLAH IS A ZAKIR

The genuine talibul 'ilm, with the qualities mentioned above, has another claim as well. He performs what is fardh and wajib; he is punctual with his sunnate mu'aqqidah; he acts with taqwa - such a talibul 'ilm enjoys a station no less than that of one performing abundant nawafil and making abundant zikr. In comparison, this talibul 'ilm may not be performing much nawafil, his zikr and tasbihat may be minimal, but abstaining from sin and performing what is fardh, not allowing his namaz to become qadha, performing what is wajib and sunnate mu'aqqidah, he has a stage even higher. He is in obedience all the time; he is with taqwa all the time; he is in ibadat all the time; he is a zakir all the time. He is the misdaq of the Hadith sharif:

Every obedient servant of Allah is a zakir.

Today the importance of 'ilm has been placed in front of you. The very high status of 'ilme Deen has been related to you. What has also been adequately shown is that the ta'lim attained in the darsgah will reach completion and perfection (ikmaliet and itmamiet) in the khanqah. Any deficiencies will be corrected in the khanqah, where aptness and practical application are taught (intibaqiet and tatbiqat).
Perfection in zahiri a'mal cannot be achieved without the batini akhlaq. For example: Namaz is part of the zahiri a'mal. Perfection in namaz cannot be achieved without having the quality of ihsan as explained in the Hadithe Jibril quoted and explained earlier. Ihsan forms part of the batini akhlaq and is elucidated in the khanqah. Both zahiri a'mal and batini akhlaq are brought to perfection in the khanqah. The state of maqame ihsan is attained. Ikmaliet and itmamiet are thus achieved.
The great need for both the darsgah and the khanqah has been laid out in front of you. Supporting waqi'at, Qur'an Sharif ayat and Hadith sharif have been quoted, and the example of the As- habas Suffah has been brought to your notice.

26.SUMMARY & DUAA:

We have need for the acquisition of 'ilm, with effort and serenity, for which we are dependent on the madrasas. And for practical application of 'ilm we are dependent on the khanqas. The dire necessity for both have been explained in detail to you, by the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the tawfiq, in the correct meaning, to be talib of tarbiyet and talib of 'ilme Deen, with ikhlas and sidq.

Chapter No.:

3

1.FOREWORD

Allhamdu-lillah, with the assistance of friends, and the Fadhl of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of our sheikh, this third booklet is ready.

Hadhratjee stated on several occasions that just one discourse is sufficient for anyone with sincerity. In other words, just one discourse has in it enough material - be it a mere sentence - to set the seeker after Truth in the right direction.

Booklet number one, with the main theme of the methodology of self-rectification, has enough material in it to have given most of us direction to our efforts. It not only gives us the logical reasoning behind the system adopted by a sheikh in Tasawwuf, but it also has sufficient practical points to keep one busy with one's self-improvement: e.g. "paying back" qadha namaz, improving the quality of one's ibadat, etc.

The second booklet on Ilm, Jihad and the Khanqa is a "breather" for the beginner while he reads booklet number one over and over again to digest and assimilate the many points made in it.

That is not to say that booklet number two is of any lesser value. Some of the points made in it are as follows:

- It is a superb defence of the khanqa. The bases for the various exercises performed in the khanqa are justified from Qur'an and Hadith shareef.
- If any had the misconception that the khanqa is meant only for sinners who wish to reform, this false idea has also been forcefully demolished.
- The importance and status of Ilm and the Madrasah have been emphasised.Befuddled thinking on the important subject of Jihad has been cleared. The aims of Jihad and conditions for Jihad have been laid down quite clearly. Etc., etc.

Most readers will have gained much more from the discourse than the few points made above.

So, we come to booklet number three. The tone and content of this discourse is very different from the others. The value and importance of this discourse will be quite obvious to the reader. Disclosing anything more would be to spoil the surprise awaiting the reader! Varying topics are discussed in this discourse but, for the sake of having a title, I have labelled this discourse "FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP; PRAISE AND CENSURE".

A problem facing many readers has been to remember the meanings of the Urdu/ Arabic words. To leave these words out completely would seriously affect the discourse. Dr. Ismaiel Mangera.

2.FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP; PRAISE AND CENSURE.

[This is a translation of a majlis-e-khas held in Jalalabad, India, on the 2nd April 1989,corresponding to 24th Shabaan 1409.]

If the Sahaba-kiram (r.a.) were to arrive here from the World of Departed Souls (Alime Barzakh) and see us as in our present state, they would be astonished at the strangeness: in what state were we when they left us, and what is our condition now.

3.RESPECT AND HONOUR

Let me quote just one example of their behaviour:

Imam Hasan (or Husain) (R.A.), the grandson of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) went to see a Sahabi(r.a.) , who was a mohaddith, to ask some mas'alah

on some aspect of Deen. On reaching the Sahabi's (r.a.) residence, he waited outside for the Sahabi(r.a.) to come out. This was the correct etiquette in this situation. When the Sahabi (r.a.) came out, he greeted him. Recognising the honoured guest, the Sahabi (r.a.) said, "You should have called me from inside." Imam Hasan (or Husain) (r.a.) replied, "I acted according to my grandfather's instructions."

The Sahaba (r.a.) had been ordered not to call out to Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) when desiring to ask a mas'alah, but to wait outside.

Lo! Those who call thee from behind the private apartments, most of them have no sense. And if they had had patience till thou comest forth unto them, it had been better for them. And Allah is forgiving and merciful.

He continued: "I have come to enquire about some Deeni matter from you." The Sahabi (r.a.) gladly obliged. A discussion took place and the matter was resolved.

It so happened that the Sahabi (r.a.) had to travel someplace. His horse arrived at that moment, and he walked over to his horse. Imam Hasan (or Husain) (r.a.) walked to the opposite side of the horse and held the stirrup steady in anticipation of the Sahabi (r.a.) mounting.
The Sahabi (r.a.) became embarrassed that such an honoured person as the grandson of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) should stand in attendance on him. Instead of mounting he walked over to Imam Hasan (or Husain) (r.a.) and said, "It is very gracious of you to hold the stirrup for me, but really, it is not necessary."

Imam Hasan (or Husain) (r.a.) said, "This is just to enable you to mount with ease. It is my grandfather's instructions that one respectfully serves one's ustad."

You will notice that there was no thought as to whose grandson he was and that this service was below his dignity. He had no airs about him.

The Sahabi (r.a.) responded by taking the hand of Imam Hasan (or Husain) (r.a.) and raising it to his lips, he kissed it. "If your grandfather had instructed you in that manner, then he has instructed us in this manner."

4.LOVE AND AFFECTION

Muhabbat! Love and affection! Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) has said that he desires no service for his progeny. His only desire is that we love them.

Love (muhabbat) is an elevated and noble quality. It springs from the heart. True muhabbat has its source in the central depths of the heart, in the very core of the heart. True muhabbat is no ordinary thing but a very precious gift.

Hadhratwala (r.a.) related an interesting incident:

A buzurg went to see another buzurg...

There is an old saying: Pigeons keep company with pigeons, hawks with hawks. [cf. English proverb 'Birds of a feather flock together'. - Tr.]

A person tends to keep company with those of a similar temperament.

The one buzurg arrived at the house of another buzurg. After salaam was made, the second buzurg enquired from the first, "What can I do for you?"

The first buzurg replied, "I am in need of 500 rupees."

"Very well." Without hesitation the second buzurg went and brought forth 500 rupees which he gave to the first buzurg, who thanked him and left.

The second buzurg then went back into his house. He went and sat on his bed and started weeping

.

Wives are normally personal and informal, as they should be. Husbands and wives have a special intimate and informal relationship which allows them to talk openly to one another. What type of relationship would they have if this informality was not there? But, a pity and a shame! Hai afsos! In this day and age there are no men left - men in the true sense, whether they are husbands or noble heads of families. I have seen another age where the gentry consisted of noble men, and husbands were men of superb qualities. But, times have changed, and this age is as different from that as the heavens differ from the earth. It is a wife's privilege to be personal and informal to whatever degree. Even if she uses the informal "tu" (you) instead of the respectful "tum" (thou) when speaking, she does it out of muhabbat. Dear servants of Allah, do not take her to be disrespectful and rude. Please bear in mind that Allah Ta'ala is addressed mostly as "tu".

To continue: The wife saw her buzurg husband sitting and crying. She said, "Wah, mia! Wah! In unbridled enthusiasm (josh) you handed over 500 rupees. Now mia is greatly aggrieved, crying his heart out at losing 500 rupees! So, why hand over the money in the first place?"

The buzurg replied calmly, "That is not why I am shedding tears."

The wife asked, "Then what is the reason?"

The buzurg said, "I have good cause for shedding tears: After my death I will be brought in front of Allah Ta'ala to account for myself. If Allah Ta'ala were to ask me 'Why was it necessary for your friend to come begging at your door? Why did you not keep yourself informed of his circumstances, and go yourself to his house to assist when the need arose? Why did he have to come to you?'If this is what I am asked, what answer will I give...?"

This incident was narrated to us by Hadhratwala (R.A.). He used to discuss a wide variety of topics in his majlis, all connected with self-rectification (islah). Do not have the misconception that only dharb was discussed: "Illallah! Illallah!" and still louder "Illallah! Illallah!"

It is very easy to make zikr in this manner. It has a joy of its own. But be careful: immersed in the joy of your zikr, do not increase the loudness of your voice. Your duty is to inform your sheikh of your enthusiasm and fervour. He will then use his discretion to increase, decrease or even stop the zikr. This is obedience (ittiba').

Just look: Hadhrat Uwais Qarni (r.a.), despite his passionate desire to see Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), did not undertake the journey to Medina without informing him and obtaining his permission. Incidents related about his great love for Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) would amaze us. Yet his restraint demonstrates what obedience really means.

5.JOSH AND HOSH

What is unbridled enthusiasm (josh)? Nothing. Sensibility (hosh) even without josh, is something. Hosh is of great use and service. In fact, there is nothing of

greater service than sensibility (hosh). Whereas josh by itself? Don't ask! It is of no service - it is a useless commodity leading to destruction.

Take the illustration of a pot of food cooking on the stove. While the cooking is going on there is a lot of josh - boiling and steaming with a lot of noise - but the food is not ready to eat as yet. It is of no value. Let this phase of josh pass and the food allowed to simmer - it is now so quiet that one may not even be aware that curry is being cooked. Yet, lift the lid and the aroma of delicious food ready to be eaten fills one's nostrils. This end-product is of great value.

There are three stages that a salik goes through in suluk: The FIRST is of the beginner, who is called the mubtadi; the SECOND is of the intermediate, called the mutawassat; and the THIRD is that of the muntahi, the accomplished. The condition of the muntahi is like that food that is finally cooked - tranquil and quiescent. The josh, the unbridled enthusiasm and the stormy turbulence, are features of the mutawassat, the in-between stage. The muntahi does not exhibit these features, except rarely. Even then these features are chance happenings, lasting a very short duration only and at a very low level.

These are important masa'il connected with suluk. These are masa'il related to emotional states and conditions (hal and kaifiyat). One is amazed at that salik who gets himself entangled in these states. Whenever he has to inform his sheikh of his condition he keeps repeating the same emotional states, showing his obsession with them. The sheikh is watching: "Oh yes," the sheikh tells himself, "He is still green, still half-ripe, still bitter-sweet, still immature."

This digression followed the qissah of the buzurg giving his friend, a fellow-buzurg, 500 rupees. BUT - a note of warning! - do NOT deduce from this qissah that you should now act in a similar manner, that you should now give money freely to anybody who declares his friendship. Beware! Don't ever do a thing like that. To imitate an action also requires intelligence - naql requires aql. Do not make a monkey out of yourself - do not be "monkey see monkey do".

6.FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP

Let me point out that in our qissah both persons were buzurgs; both had sincerity and honesty. The asking and giving was a once-in-a-while episode and not a regular affair. Fair enough, should you find a friend who has proved himself to be a real buzurg filled with a similar degree of sincerity and honesty, then you may go ahead. Such a person will rarely ask for assistance, and he will do so only when in dire need.

However, in these times such sincerity is rare. Do not be taken in by someone merely proclaiming his friendship. Do not be fooled into thinking that mere statements of friendship indicate sincerity and honesty. Do not judge today's friends on the merits of a bygone age.

Which reminds me of another qissah. There are youngsters present in today's majlis. They especially should listen with open ears.

Hadhratwala (R.A.) narrated:

There was a youngster - like one of today's youngsters - who had become friendly with another youth. The youngster's elderly father noticed his coming home late at

nights and enquired, "One night, two nights, three nights, and now every night you are coming home very late. What is your story?"

The youngster replied, "I go to visit a friend of mine. Sitting and talking with him, it tends to get a bit late."

The father said, "Really? Oho! There are still such friends today?" The father continued, "When you are about to visit your friend tomorrow, let me know. I also wish to meet this dear friend of yours."

The following evening the youngster got ready and informed his father that he was about to leave to visit his friend. His father said, "Very well. I will be with you in a minute." The father kept

himself busy with first one task and then another, causing some delay. The youngster became restless.

"Don't fret. I am coming now," the father said. Deliberately he busied himself some more until it became quite late. "At last I am free. Let us go," he said.

The streets were empty. It was close to midnight and most people had retired for the night. On reaching the friend's house the youngster knocked on the door and called out to his friend. His friend enquired from inside. "Who is it?"

(Mind you, the friend still wants to know who it is!)

The youngster gave his name. "Oh! It is rather late...Never mind. Hang on." The friend came to the door and opened it. "Why have you come so late?" he asked.

The father had coached his son along the way as to what to say. Accordingly the son replied, "Some problem has cropped up causing my delay. I have landed myself in some problem."

The word "problem" had a noticeable affect on the friend. He yawned and said, "I

was fast asleep. I am still feeling heavy-headed, and my mind is not quite clear. What you do is come back in the morning. Then we will see what is what."

Saying this, the friend closed the door, fastened the door-chain and went back to bed.

After a few moments of deathly silence the father spoke. "I have seen your friend of these times. And so have you. Now you come with me. I also have a friend from the old days. He has gone quite old, and so have I. I have not seen him for ages, but never mind, let me show you what type of friend he is."

Late as it was, father and son proceeded to the house of the father's friend. When they reached there the father knocked on the door and called out to his friend. The knocking woke up the friend and he called back from inside, "I'll be with you in a minute."

(You will note that he did not ask "Who is it?" Even after an absence of several years he had recognised the voice immediately, in contrast to the youngster's friend.)

He did not come to the door "in a minute". There was some delay. And when he did open the door he presented a strange spectacle as he stood in the doorway: in his one arm he was clutching a bag; in his other arm he had a stick; and on his head was balanced a pot!

After salaams were exchanged, the father asked his friend, "What is all this?"

The friend replied, "Nothing really. When I recognised your voice the thought struck me that, coming at this time of the night after an absence of several years, you must have some special problem. I have hurriedly made these few preparations, and this caused the delay in my coming to the door." The friend went

on to explain: "This pot on my head has some food: if you have nothing to eat, this is to take home for your family. This bag in my hand contains money: if some creditor is making life difficult for you, this is to settle your debts. Thirdly, it may be that some enemy is after your blood: I may be old but I can still wield a stick quite deftly, and I'll contribute at least two or three shots with this stick."

The father reassured his friend, "No. There are no problems with food or money. There is also no fight. It is just that this son of mine used to come home late at night because of some friend of his. We went and saw this friend. I, in turn, offered to show him my old friend, which I have done. Shukria - thank you very much. Really, I am not in need of anything. Please forgive us for inconveniencing you at this late hour."

"You are welcome. It is your right," his friend said.

Making salaam, father and son took their leave. The lesson on the true friendship that existed in those years had been forcefully driven home to the youngster.

This is not an age in which you will find such friendships. So-called friends have earned some fancy titles for themselves:

-"Chamchi-yar" - "Friend of the tablespoon".

-"Dastarkhan-ke-yar" - "Friend of the table spread".

-"Muhazzab-daku" - "Cultured/sophisticated thief".

Etc., etc.

7.SAND AND SILVER

Let me illustrate by relating a sequence of events that Hadhratwala (r.a.) narrated to us:

There resided in Thana Bhawan the son of a wealthy noble. His father had passed away, leaving him much wealth in the form of income-producing property, farmlands and cash. A number of hangers-on surrounded him very quickly and it was not long before all his cash was spent. He then sold all his properties. When the money from the sale of these properties got finished he put up the farmlands for sale.

Some well-wishers, true friends of his late father, saw the deterioration in his affairs and tried to advise him. "Arè mia!" they tried to make him understand, "Just think how hard your father struggled to achieve some security for you, his only son. Don't throw everything away."

The son responded by saying, "My father was a fool! He gave away silver and accumulated sand. I am not so stupid. I am more intelligent: I give away sand and acquire silver."

In those days the rupee coin was made of silver. There was no paper money. In buying property and farmlands (sand) the father had to pay in silver coins. The son considered himself wiser in getting silver (rupees) for the properties and farmlands (sand) that he was selling.

Yet, what does the Hadith shareef say?

In essence this means that whosoever has property, land or farms should not sell them. The reason is obvious. These are solid and permanent investments. Cash, on the contrary, is liquid and changeable. Property will give an income. Farms will produce crops. On the other hand, cash will be spent - cash in itself is non-productive. Yes, if one wishes to buy a better property or farm, then you may sell

what you have. In this instance it is more of an exchange than a selling-out. This is the extent to which Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had concern for us, that he even advised us on worldly affairs for our material well-being and comfort.

The son acted contrary to the Hadith shareef. Moreover, he considered himself clever and his father stupid. Can anyone make such a thick skull understand?

As an example of how his friends made use of him the following incident is related:

A friend came to visit him, looking sad and dejected. "Why so sad today?" the son asked.

Friend: "Nothing serious really. There is a fair in Meerath and I had a desire to go. Not being able to go is making me feel rotten."

Son: "Why? What is the problem?"

Friend: "To go there, and also have money for the various exhibitions..."

Son: "That is no problem. Feeling better?"

Friend: "Yes, but...to go alone without congenial company, one cannot really enjoy oneself."

Son: "Sure. Sure."

The son asked how much he required. The friend indicated the sum. The son very generously handed the money over.

This was the manner in which he spent on his friends. The net result was that soon he had no property, no farmlands and no cash. He was reduced to begging and

existed on kindly hand-outs from relatives in Hyderabad and elsewhere.
His friends? They had quietly disappeared. This is the friendship of these times.

It is necessary to give a detailed explanation of friendships in modern times, in case you wish to imitate that buzurg who gave his fellow-buzurg 500 rupees. Never mind 500, do not give even 5! Otherwise he will be back the next day for more. Once you give something, he now comes on a regular basis. He is not one in need, but one who has a habit of asking - he is not a sahebe hajit but a sahebe adit.

I speak from experience. Let me relate what happened some years ago. My rooms were across the courtyard from here, upstairs, in those days. I am now speaking of a time when commodities were inexpensive: Have you seen times when one rupee could buy 16 kg. wheat? Or even 8 kg. or 4 kg.? I doubt it.
In any case, one day a perfect gentleman came to see me. He was well-dressed in an achkan and he carried a cane in his hand. He spoke a polished and refined Urdu. From what he said I gathered that he was in some financial difficulty. One does not give such a cultured person, well-dressed and cane in hand, 5 or 10 rupees. I took out 30 rupees and handed the sum to him. 30 rupees of those days most probably equal 3000 rupees nowadays. He accepted the money and left. The following year he was back. And he comes back every year for his 30 rupees!
Yes, one year I gave him less than 30 rupees. He was quick to notice. "Every year you give 30. This time it is less than 30," he reprimanded.
Offo! Very well. I filled in the deficit.
I am going into a fair amount of detail in telling you all about the 500 rupees of our qissah in order to make you fully knowledgeable. It should not be a case of :

In essence, this saying means that a person with half-baked Deeni knowledge is a danger to one's iman, just as a half-baked doctor, a quack, is a danger to one's life. One does not want the situation where you tell yourself, "Hadhratjee mentioned a qissah wherein the lesson was that friendship was to give money to friends at their homes," and you also go and give money at the homes of those coming to ask. I want to emphasise again that in our qissah both were buzurgs, both had sincerity and honesty, and both recognised the rights and limits of true friendship.

Nowadays, so-called friends prey on others, growing fat themselves, while their victims die thin and frail.

8.ASK FROM A BADSHA OR A WALI

To put the perspective straight: While the Shariat has forbidden asking, it has also allowed asking. If you are forced into a situation where you have to ask from others (i.e. you have become a sahebe hajit) then ask from a badshah (king) or from a true wali.

Why?

Here are the reasons: To beg or ask is to put oneself to disgrace. A king, however, has such a lofty worldly status that he is beyond looking with contempt at anybody. He does not look down on those coming to him with their needs. His heart is too magnanimous, and his wisdom too farsighted to stoop to such pettiness. Yes, a king is the person to ask from.

Or ask from a true wali-buzurg, not a bogus one. We said that begging or asking is associated with humiliation. But a true wali does not look with contempt at

anybody. On the contrary, he considers himself to be the most despicable creature on earth. So there is no humiliation in asking from such a person who has such a low opinion of himself. Such a wali considers himself to be more miskin than anybody else; he has a desire to die in a state of miskin; and he desires to be raised in the company of the misakin in the Hereafter.
This desire, this du'a, is in keeping with the teachings of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam):

"O Allah! Keep me alive in a state of miskin. O Allah! Grant me death in a state of miskin. And, O Allah! raise me up (in the Hereafter) in the group of misakin."

What does this mean? One person who read this Hadith shareef came up to me and said, "Hadhrat, to be in a state of miskin is to be in poverty. This is a very difficult situation to be in. A miskin has nothing to eat and he has nothing to wear. How can one possibly make du'a to be kept in a state of miskin and to die as one?"
Oho! That is not the meaning of miskin, to be financially destitute. The meaning of miskin in this context is ijs-wa- inkisari - humility and humbleness - and kasre nafs - broken nafsani desires. This means: to consider oneself the most wretched creature on earth, and not to look with contempt at anyone else. This is the meaning attached to the word miskin.

So, if you have to ask, ask from a wali: he considers himself to be the most contemptuous creature on earth, and he does not look down on anyone else.

To be in need (sahebe hajit) is one thing. To be in the habit of asking (sahebe adit) is another. In this day and age the sahebe adit are plentiful; those in real need are

but few.
Muhabbat - real, true love and affection - is a rare and wonderful quality, more especially in this age. But, do not be fooled by a person merely proclaiming his affection. One has seen enough tragedies resulting from such situations.

9.HYPOCRITES - TWO TYPES

In the time of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) there were also those who falsely proclaimed their muhabbat. They even sat in his majlis and made namaz behind him. These were the hypocrites (munafiq) who were insincere in their beliefs (i'tiqad). Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) was aware of them: he was kept informed about them through Divine Revelation (wahi). This category of hypocrite has ceased to exist according to the Shariat. A person is free to chose belief (iman) or unbelief (kufr). Anybody choosing kufr need not hide behind a mask of iman.
The category of hypocrite seen in abundance now, is in matters of deeds and actions. These comprise the munafiq amali.

Seeing there were hypocrites in the time of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), there is no reason to expect hypocrites not to be present in the company of a wali. The difference between the two groups of hypocrites is that the former consisted of hypocrites in i'tiqad and the latter consists of hypocrites in a'mal, as already explained.
The i'tiqadi hypocrites were given due consideration by Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). Similarly you will find the wali being considerate to the amali hypocrites around him to a greater extent. One reason, among several, for giving

consideration to the i'tiqadi hypocrites was the following: the general community as well as foreign countries, were not aware of the hypocrites. In their eyes everybody was Muslim, including these who were outwardly Muslim but who had kufr in their hearts. Any difference in attitude towards them would have been misunderstood by others. Thus each person was dealt with according to his outward presentation as a Muslim. The hypocrites portrayed themselves as Muslims in order to participate in the wealth of the Muslims, so that they could also share in the booty coming to the Muslims.

Similarly, we see in this age the (amali) hypocrite attaching himself to a famous buzurg - one in whom the public has faith and confidence. The hypocrite will be seen visiting the buzurg, staying with him, and proclaiming his affiliation to him. Why? - The objective is to attain some worldly benefit, some material gain from others, by using this connection with the buzurg. The buzurg may be fully aware of what is going on, but he will not say anything. A wali of Allah prefers to keep silent.

It happened with our Hajee (Imdadullah) Saheb (r.a.). (Hajee Saheb(R.A.) is the sheikh of my sheikh, i.e. your "great-grandpeer" in the genealogy of our silsilah.) Hadhratwala (r.a.) related this incident:

A person came up to Hajee Saheb (r.a.) and said, "Hadhrat, there is a certain person who is posing as your son-in-law and thereby collecting money for himself from your other mureeds." Of course, Hajee Saheb (r.a.) had no daughter, no son - no children whatsoever!

Hajee Saheb (r.a.) was a unique and wonderful buzurg of the time. He remarked,

"Arè bhai - my dear brother - up to now nobody has benefited from me as far as Deen is concerned. If somebody is now, at least, deriving some material benefit from me, shall I stop him also?"

Such was our Hajee Saheb (r.a.). We are all aware of the great auliya produced at his hands, by the grace of Allah Ta'ala, yet just see his humble attitude. Others may not be so daring as to pose as sons-in-law. Some content themselves by establishing a relationship with a sheikh, with or without becoming bay't, to derive some worldly benefit. They make no effort to derive any Deeni benefit, but make a point of being seen in the company of the sheikh, trying to impress others as being close to the sheikh. All for material benefit.

10.SIR SYED AHMED KHAN - TWO QISSAS

Something else along the same lines comes to mind:

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's name had cropped up in discussion. Hadhratwala (r.a.) then commented, "People are strange. When some fault of a person is noticed, all the good in him is ignored. All the good gets washed down the drain. One should not do this. One should bear in mind the good in him also. One should not have both eyes closed, but keep one eye open at least. Do not totally condemn a person because of his worldliness. A dunyadar (worldly person) may have qualities of tolerance and benevolence, constancy and faithfulness, to a degree not found in the deendar (religious-minded)."

Syed Ahmed Khan was his actual name. The "Sir" in front was attached when the English conferred a knighthood on him. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had a reputation for

being a worldly person (dunyadar). He had some fine qualities and he was a well-wisher of the Muslim community. However, this concern of his was like that of "an immature friend". This concise description was given by Hadhratwala (r.a.), who then continued, "But some qualities in him deserve to be praised." Hadhratwala (r.a.) then went on to relate two incidents.

Before continuing, let me ask you to give these incidents some thought. Use your sense of judgement. These are all matters concerned with islah. These incidents were not meant as entertainment - Hadhratwala's (r.a.) khanqa was no cinema for entertainment. Every talk had some message, some lesson of a unique nature. The whole object of relating qissas is to take a lesson. The Hadith shareef states: Fortunate is that person who derives the best of lessons from others.

The Qur'an shareef has numerous qissas concerning the kuffar and mushrikin, the ahle kitab (Nasara and Yahud), and the munafiqin. The purpose is to teach a lesson: These were people who had the truth explained to them time and again, but they refused to take heed. Just see how they were dealt with. So, O Muslims, save yourselves from a similar fate. See that you do not behave like them, for Allah Ta'ala's system is such that eventually His punishment descends on the disobedient. Take note that the punishment of Allah Ta'ala is severe. Do not be fooled into thinking that the respite granted while sins are being committed is a sign of condonation. No! It is Allah Ta'ala's system to give respite initially, before His wrath descends. On the other hand, look at the sincere Sahaba (r.a.): Because of their good deeds they were treated differently. On occasions they were assisted by

mala'ekah and their hearts were strengthened with divine inspiration (ilham), so that they remained steadfast at times of trials and tribulations.

There are lessons in these. Fortunate is that person who can derive lessons from others: to be able to see how the good were dealt with and thereby try to improve; and to be able to see the way in which evil-doers were punished and thereby abstain from evil.

Let us now go the qissas related by Hadhratwala (r.a.).

THE FIRST QISSAH: A person applied for a post to the governor. This was during the time of British rule. In his application the person falsely stated that he was the son-in-law of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. He was told to present himself for an interview on a certain day. In the meantime the English governor sent a wire to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan wanting to know if the applicant was his son-in-law.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan realised that it was some impostor, but replied, "Yes, he is my son-in-law." The governor, having established the applicant's relationship to one so well-known to the British, gave him an excellent post.

During his leave this impostor son-in-law arrived at the residence of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had never seen him before and, therefore, did not recognise him. "Who are you?"

The impostor replied, "I am that liar who passed himself off as your son-in-law to obtain a post with the governor."

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan said, "That is no problem. Now what I cannot do is get you married to my daughter to make you my actual son-in-law. You are already

married. Yes, what I can do is adopt your wife as my daughter as from today. So now you are, in reality, my son-in-law."

Hadhratwala (r.a.) told us that as long as he lived, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan treated this adopted daughter as his own. Whenever he called his other daughters home he called her too. She and her husband received the same consideration that his own daughters and their husbands received.
"He was a dunyadar," Hadhratwala (r.a.) commented, "but see how faithfully he kept up this relationship. Such faithfulness is rarely found even amongst those who are deendar."

It is no easy task to maintain a relationship in a faithful manner - what is called nibhahna. Young people do not observe this relationship in respect to their fathers; and mureeds do not observe this relationship in its correct context with their sheikhs. One finds that it does not take much for a person to feel offended, and the next thing is that he leaves everything and off he goes.

THE SECOND QISSAH: This qissah is also worth listening to carefully, and pondering over.
It is a hot summer's day. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan is lying relaxed on a couch in his room. A visiting friend from Hyderabad is lying similarly relaxed on another couch nearby. Sweet-scented grass screens hang on one side: a servant stands on the other side of the screens and sprinkles water onto them from time to time, while tugging on the strings of ceiling fans, keeping them in constant motion, causing a cool breeze to pass through the room. The glass doors to the room are closed. In line

with the doors, a short distance away, is a well.

A beggar comes along, stops at the well and lays down his bundle. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan observes the arrival of the beggar. Being quick-witted, he sums up the situation and remarks to his friend, "Just watch. This beggar is going to change his clothes and pose as a durwesh and come to us. But I will not give him a single paisa!"

Just as Sir Syed Ahmed Khan has predicted, the beggar takes out another set of clothes from his bundle, takes off the garments he is wearing, and dresses himself as a durwesh. He walks to the door of the room and knocks loudly and confidently. Such people are not the timid type. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, true to his word, ignores the knock. However, such beggars cannot take a hint. The knocking becomes more vigorous and persistent, as if it is a matter of life and death.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan is flustered. Reluctantly he orders the servant to open the door and allow the "durwesh" in. The "durwesh" enters, makes salaam, calmly seats himself on an empty couch, and starts speaking to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. However Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, after giving a very cursory reply to the salaam, pays him no further attention. Seeing this indifference, the voice of the "durwesh" suddenly becomes sharp and high-pitched. "Do you not recognise who I am? I am that person who has had the honour of visiting such-and-such!" The person whose name he takes - he must have picked it up somewhere - was none other than the peer of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan.

Do not be surprised. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan is well known as a dunyadar, but he was also deendar. He used to be punctual with his five times namaz with jama't; he

kept a beard strictly according to the Shariat; he used to recite the Qur'an shareef regularly; and he was punctual with his tahajjud namaz. Admittedly, he held controversial views on some points of aqa'id.

To continue: The "durwesh" is saying, "Yes, I visited him. These eyes of mine have been blessed by gazing at his gracious countenance."

A change comes over Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. He is immediately attentive and sits up respectfully. He apologises, "Please forgive me. I did not recognise you." He turns to the servant and says, "Bring me my cash box." The servant brings a small box which he places in front of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, who takes from the box a handful of silver coins. He gets up and walks over to the "durwesh" and respectfully hands him the money. "Huzur (Sir), please be kind enough to accept this gift."

The "durwesh" takes the money - after all, this was the purpose of his visit - and departs.

Watching all this bemusedly is the V.I.P. from Hyderabad. (Important people have important people as friends. They do not take friends from the riff-raff.) He comments, "What happened? You said you would not give him a single paisa, and there you went and gave him a small fortune." He is obviously unaware of the reason for the change in Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's attitude.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan asks, "Did you not hear the name he mentioned?"

The friend says, "Yes, I heard."

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan explains, "Well, that happens to be my peer-saheb. When he said that he had set eyes on my peer- saheb how could I ignore him? I was duty

bound to be respectful and present him something. In any case, I got away cheaply."

The friend says, "Got away cheaply? But I saw you gave him quite a big sum."

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan says, "I swear that had he said that I should give him the entire box I would have done so! No. I got away cheaply."

Hadhratwala (r.a.) concluded his narration by saying. "See, these were the qualities to be seen in the dunyadar in those days. Think. Do those who are deendar possess such qualities?"

Let us now summarise our discussion on hypocrites:

Firstly: Hypocrisy in the time of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) was in beliefs (i'tiqad). Hypocrisy nowadays is in deeds and actions (a'mal).

Secondly: Just as i'tiqadi hypocrites presented themselves in the company of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), one will find amali hypocrites in the company of a wali.

Thirdly: Just as due consideration was given to those hypocrites then, so too will these hypocrites be treated with due regard now, and even more so.

11.PRAISE AND CENSURE

Hadhratwala (r.a.) used to say, "Do not place any faith in any person's devotion to you; and do not feel offended at any person's censure. In this age praise and censure should be equal in your eyes." This was said in an age when there was still some degree of sincerity in people.

What type of buzurg is he who gets elated when he is praised and feels now he is somebody? And when he is censured he is offended. He stops speaking with the one who has criticised him and avoids meeting him.
What type of pious person is he? What type of buzurg is he? What type of tahajjud-guzar is he? When he is praised he becomes conceited and when he is censured he nurtures hatred and malice in his heart!

In this day and age a person will praise you to the skies as long as he can make use of you. The day he finds he cannot manipulate you he starts castigating you, speaking ill of you. Now, tell me: what value would you set on such praise or such criticism?

The following comments of Hadhratwala (r.a.) appear very appropriate. (At the time I was alone with Hadhratwala [----------]. On many such occasions with nobody else present, Hadhratwala (R.A.) would come forth with breath-taking pearls of wisdom.)
"I wish to say something," Hadhratwala (r.a.) said.
"Yes, Hadhrat."
"See here, in this day and age no person is loyal and faithful (mu'taqid) to anyone else, except a few, masha'allah." (Hadhratwala's [----------] tone and expression was something special.) "Each person is a devotee of his own self. As long as you pander to others, agreeing with their whims, talking softly and sweetly, people will express their devotion to you. The moment you say 'No. No;' and people cannot make use of you, both affection and devotion vanish - muhabbat is gone and so is

i'tiqad."

(And this has been borne out by experience!)

Hadhratwala (r.a.) then continued, "The thought that people will not speak ill of one is a delusion. Dear brother, if people spoke ill of a nabi, why would people not speak ill of a wali? And if there is nobody speaking ill of that person then he is not a wali. It is impossible that a nabi should have people speaking ill of him, but a wali should have none to speak ill of him."

Hadhratwala (r.a.) narrated a qissah to illustrate this point:

This incident occurred in the age when female slaves - strictly according to the Shariat - still existed.

A person owning a female slave (laundi) had fallen into hard times. He told the laundi (female slave), "You see my condition - I have been reduced to poverty and there is hardly anything to eat. I do not see why you should suffer with me. I have decided rather to sell you."

She said, "Whatever makes you happy. I don't have any complaints. However I do have a request to make."

"What is it?"

"If you do decide to sell me, sell me to anybody except Baqibillah!"

Who was Baqibillah (r.a.)? He was a very great buzurg, a wali of great fame, the sheikh of none other than the famous Mujaddid Alfe Thani (r.a.) of Sarhind shareef, in the Naqshabandi silsilah. Baqibillah resided in Delhi, where he also lies buried.

The owner was surprised at this request of his laundi. "Why ever not?"
The laundi explained, "I have had occasion to go into Delhi for some work on a number of occasions. Wherever I have gone I have heard nothing but praise of Baqibillah. Nowhere have I heard anybody say anything bad about him. I therefore have my doubts as to his being a real wali. That people should speak ill of a nabi but not of a wali, is completely unheard of! What kind of wali is that?"
Her owner said, "Baqibillah is the very person I am going to sell you to. But, to please you, I will request three days' grace, during which I will have the option of taking you back. You remain with him for three days and see for yourself what type of person he is. I will tell him that I reserve the right to take you back within three days. If I do not, you will remain with him."

Three days' grace in a transaction is called "Ba'y Khiare-shart" in the Shariat.

The arrangement satisfied the laundi. The owner subsequently sold her to Baqibillah (r.a.) - with the three days' option - and left the laundi at his house.
Mealtime came. Baqibillah saheb (r.a.) told the newly acquired laundi, "O Allah-ki-bandi, it is time for meals. Go and fetch a light for the fire."
It was before the age of matches. Fires were lighted from burning embers obtained from the neighbourhood. The laundi went to the next-door neighbour and requested a light from the lady of the house. The neighbour told her to go ahead and help herself, and the laundi took some burning embers from the fire. As she was leaving, the neighbour asked, "For whom are you taking the light?" "For Baqibillah saheb," the laundi replied.
That was enough. The name of Baqibillah saheb (r.a.) was enough to set off a

torrent of vituperation from the neighbour. Swearing and cursing Baqibillah saheb (r.a.), the woman forced the laundi to return the burning embers and chased her out.

The laundi returned, very upset...and empty-handed.

Baqibillah saheb (r.a.) asked, "Did you not bring a light for the fire?"

The laundi mumbled something.

"No. No. Give me a full explanation," Baqibillah (r.a.) insisted.

The laundi then explained how she had gone to the neighbour, got permission to take an ember, when asked for whom, she had said it was for him, the swearing and cursing that had followed, and finally being chased out empty-handed.

"Offo!" Baqibillah saheb (r.a.) remarked when she had finished, "Never mind Delhi, but we have people just over the wall calling us evil names!"

The laundi understood immediately. She had been given the answer to the doubts she had expressed to her previous owner.

Before three days had passed the previous owner arrived to find out whether she wished to stay or not. The laundi said, "I wish to stay. I have discovered that he is a real wali: I have found that he has a neighbour who speaks ill of him."

The laundi in this qissah is underlining the point made: If a nabi has people talking ill of him then a wali, one who walks in the footsteps of a nabi, will surely have people talking ill of him as well. It is essential that one's gaze should be neither on praise nor on censure. One should have a clear mind, free of all expectations from others.

A wali will not get swollen-headed with praise and he is not offended by censure Why? The reason is that the gaze of a wali has shifted from the creation and is focussed on the Creator. If an individual has not reached this stage, he will get conceited with praise and he will take offence at censure. This is a clear indication that his gaze is focussed on the creation and not on the Creator.

O salik, do you understand?

One's concern should be neither with praise nor with censure, whether one is in one's home or outside; whether praise or censure emanates from those close to you or from outsiders - more so if it comes from those close to you. From time to time you are bound to have dealings with relatives and others close to you. You are bound to face both pleasant and unpleasant situations. Should you get upset at some bitter experience then you are no wali. It is pure foolishness to expect praise and respect from relatives and those close to you - just as foolish as not to expect problems and censure from them. Expect more criticism from them. Relatives and those close to you tend to be very touchy. You shower them with kindness and favours, they are happy with you; you do not give them anything, they are upset with you. This attitude is only rarely encountered from outsiders. That is why Hadhratwala (r.a.) said, "To be desirous of that honour, respect and attention from relatives and those close to you, that others show, is a sure sign of arrogance (takabbur) in that wali."

This does not mean that relatives and those close to one are necessarily rude and disrespectful. What it means is: do not be desirous of the same attitude of respect and honour from relatives and those close to you that others may display towards

you. Should relatives and those close to you treat you with the same high regard, well and good. But from your side see that you are not desirous of such respect and honour.

It may happen that an elderly person may honour a young saleh (pious) person. He may stand up in respect, even take his hand and kiss it respectfully. However, should this young man expect his father and grandfather also to stand up for him when he meets them? Obviously not. Do not even turn your thoughts in that direction. It is a different matter if they, on their own, show respect.

Hadhratwala (r.a.) related the following: Maulana Qasim saheb's (r.a.) father was a landowner. He used to smoke a huqqah (pipe) and get the young Maulana Qasim saheb (r.a.) to prepare it for him. A buzurg happened to be passing by one day and he saw Maulana Qasim saheb (r.a.) busy with the routine of preparing the huqqah and presenting it to his father.

The buzurg took the father to one side and advised him softly, "Be kind enough not to let your son prepare your huqqah. That action causes the Arsh to shake. Kindly refrain him from it."

The father heeded the advice and thereafter never asked Maulana Qasim saheb (r.a.) to prepare his huqqah again.

One does find parents who recognise the goodness and piety in their children, and respect them accordingly. But one should not be desirous of such respect. Such a desire is a fault in wilayet and should not be present.

12.RESPECT FROM WIVES

Amongst those related and close to one, that person who is closest and has the highest degree of intimacy is one's wife. On the basis of what has been said, how can one be desirous of praise from her, and how can one expect to escape censure from her? So, in accordance with the rule that one should not anticipate any praise from those close to one, nor expect to escape from their censure, this rule will be applicable to the highest degree when it comes to the wife. A wife is most unpredictable. A parent or a child, both of whom are closely related, will draw a line in their attitude and behaviour. But a wife draws no lines. She has no regard for any etiquette. Therefore, no matter what her attitude, no matter what words she utters, no matter what unbecoming language she uses, do not take offence. On the other hand, if she praises you to the skies, it is nothing to get excited over.

Are you married? [Hadhratjee directed this question at a young man sitting in the majlis.] No? Never mind. Just listen carefully first before you do get married.

Praise and censure should be equal in your eyes to an even greater extent where the wife is concerned. Neither her praise nor her censure carries any weight. Do not feel you are in a unique situation if you are hen-pecked. If one looks at the auliya-Allah, most of them were in such situations. There were exceptions, but most had wives who called their wali-husbands harsh and offensive names, and openly expressed their displeasure with their wali-husbands. However at no stage did any wali feel upset at the wife's displeasure.

You must be aware of the Hadith shareef that states that a woman has an intelligence (aql) which is defective.

It follows that a defective intelligence will spout out anything without any insight into its correctness. You (students) may have studied and learnt this Hadith shareef. You are convinced of its truth - you have ilme yaqin. But that is as far as you have progressed. Why do I say that? Because sooner or later you are going to show tremendous displeasure at some incident. This is because the knowledge that you have acquired is at an academic level only and not at the level of wilayet. Mere academic knowledge is of temporary value. Only that knowledge assimilated at the level of wilayet will be of permanent value.

The wali has a deeper understanding. He knows what difficulties some ambiya had experienced at the hands of their wives. He knows how much vexation our Nabi(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had undergone by the doings of some of his wives. Therefore, the wali realises his own responsibility of faithfully maintaining his relationship with his wife - what we have termed "nibhahna". There are numerous incidents from the lives of the auliya-Allah one can quote.

Hadhratwala (r.a.) mentioned an episode concerning Abul Hasan Nuri (r.a.). His original name was just Abul Hasan. The "Nuri" was added on afterwards. Very often people become known by a name connected with some special feature in their lives. So also with Abul Hasan (r.a.): it was noticed that when he used to speak a nur (effulgence/luminescence) used to emanate from his mouth. He thus came to be known as Abul Hasan Nuri (r.a.).

Another buzurg who also came to be well known by a nickname is Abdul Karim (r.a.). He lived during the Sultanate period. Differences with the Sultan caused him to spend most of his time in jail. He thus became known as Abdul Karim Jaili (r.a.).

There is an episode concerning him during his stay in jail that is worth mentioning because of the lesson in it:

These buzurgs used to keep with them two sets of garments, one set being worn and one other.

13.REALITY OF ZUHD

Clothes: Let me just stop a while to point out that owning more than one set of clothes is not against the concept of asceticism (zuhd) - you may possess two, four, eight or ten sets of clothes. If Allah Ta'ala has blessed you with wealth you may sew for yourself ten sets of clothes even and it would not be against the concept of zuhd (asceticism). The proviso being that you do not put yourself in debt. It must also be pointed out that to live in ease and comfort at the cost of causing suffering to your wife and children is definitely against the concept of zuhd and wilayet. There is no question that this latter situation is one of asceticism or saintliness.

Residence: Having a double-storey or even a six-storey mansion is also not against the concept of zuhd and wilayet. Even if a person owns ten houses, it is still not against the concept of zuhd. The proviso again being that you do not have to ask from others but that Allah Ta'ala has blessed you with such wealth.

Remember: To ask (beg) is degrading.

Let us take an example: Somebody has four sons. How are all going to stay in one

house as the sons grow up and get married? If Allah Ta'ala has blessed you with wealth then provide each one with his own house.

Whenever some mureed wrote to Hadhratwala (r.a.) complaining of friction between wife and in-laws in a situation where everybody was staying together in one house, Hadhratwala (r.a.) used to write back: "As soon as possible go and stay on your own, whether by renting a house or building your own. Do not stay together."

A Farsi saying goes as follows:
"Khane khudra khane digra mitten" - Do not make your home in other peoples' homes.

How can several families stay together, using one entrance, one kitchen, one lounge, bumping into one another day and night? No. Each one's quarters should be separate. If you have four sons, and Allah Ta'ala has blessed you with wealth, provide each son with his own house. You may have only one piece of land. In that case divide the property, making sure that each son has his own quarters - the kitchen and the cooking should be separate, the allowances should be separate, the food-stock should also be kept separate. Do not share from one kitty and one stock-room, but divide out each one's share on its own.

You may be wondering what all this has to do with islah. Be assured that these are matters very important in one's islah. An important principle in islah is that one's mind should be free from unnecessary disputes and worries. The individual should be in a tranquil state. He should not be flustered. His thoughts should not be

scattered, but be collected. Taking steps to prevent problems from arising leads to tranquillity. If there is no peace of mind, the person's tilawat and his namaz are recited with a troubled mind. The person's sleep is restless. He cannot concentrate on his work. A mind in turmoil is the very antithesis of building up a connection with Allah Ta'ala.

Food: If Allah Ta'ala has blessed you with wealth, eat good nutritious food of high quality. To eat well is also not against the concept of zuhd.

Do we have any proof for making these statements? Yes, we have. What has been said is not against the sunnah of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had more than one set of clothes, more than one topi (cap), and more than one pair of shoes. Where the principle is established that it is not against the sunnah to have more than one of an item, then the quantity beyond one will vary with each individual.

For example: Several people have come to visit you. You place some fruit, e.g. mangoes, in front of them to eat. You possess only one knife. Now each guest must, of necessity, await his turn to cut his mango. Is this not bringing on an artificial difficulty? You should have several knives so that your guests are not put to inconvenience.
Similarly you should possess several spoons, plates, tumblers, etc. to be able to attend to your guests with ease.

What about food? You should be familiar with Shama'il Tirmidhi shareef - a Hadith kitab on the lifestyle of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). Therein is

a description of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) having eaten chicken, confirming that it is not against zuhd to eat well.

The Hadith shareef also describes how Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) once wore a fine quality Yemeni shawl of extreme beauty.

We have established that Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) ate well and dressed well, just as he is known to have ate simply and dressed simply. Both ways were adopted with due consideration for the Ummat. In this diversity lies the islah of the Ummat: If the well-to-do adopt a high standard of living the poor should not complain, they should not consider the rich to be arrogant. On the other hand, the rich should not be contemptuous of the simple food and attire of the poor. We can see the great wisdom behind adopting the lifestyles of the poor and the rich.

However, when it came to personal preference Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) chose simplicity for himself. Allah Ta'ala offered to turn Mount Uhud into gold but Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) preferred a life where he had something to eat at one mealtime and nothing the next.

Let us re-iterate: to eat well, to dress welland to possess more than one of an item, is not against the concept of zuhd. Bear in mind:
Deeds and actions are dependant on intentions. (Hadith shareef.)

14.IKHTIARI AND GAIR-IKHTIARI

After this digression, let us go back to our qissas. We had started off with Abul Hasan Nuri (r.a.), then we had started to speak of Abdul Karim Jaili (r.a.). To continue: Abdul Karim Jaili (r.a.) had two sets of garments. When Friday came he

had a bath and washed his clothes. After zawaal he put on his clean clothes and proceeded towards the jail gates with the intention of going for Jumu'ah namaz in town.

Jumu'ah namaz inside a jail is not permissible. One of the conditions for the validity of Jumu'ah namaz is that the site where Jumu'ah namaz is to be performed should be accessible to all members of the community. Obviously, this condition cannot be fulfilled in a prison.

When Abdul Karim Jaili (r.a.) reached the gates, he turned around and walked back. The warders were not going to oblige by opening the gates for him and, it is obvious, that he could not walk through the gates. Friday after Friday he went through the same routine. Some fellow-prisoners noticed this and said, "Hadhrat, why do you take all this trouble? Every Friday we see you wash your clothes, have a bath, dress neatly and then proceed in the direction of the town for Jumu'ah namaz, knowing full well that you will not be able to go beyond the gates. What is the necessity? Why do it?"

Abdul Karim Jaili (r.a.) replied (and herein is the lesson): "As far as it is in my power to make an effort for Jumu'ah namaz why should I not do it? What is within my power and choice (ikhtiar) that much I can do - prepare and proceed as far as the gates. What is beyond my power and choice (gair-ikhtiari) - to proceed farther - I am helpless and I return."

Do you see the lesson?

When a person can, by his own choice (ikhtiar) and determination (iradah), make

an effort to do some good, laziness is no excuse. What is beyond his power and choice (gair-ikhtiari) he should not pursue. There should be no hankering after what is gair-ikhtiari - there should be no wasted effort to attain it. It is beyond one's power and choice.

To put it another way: Constant a'mal at the level of maqame ihsan are ikhtiari - it is within the power and choice of an individual to consistently perform deeds at that level where he is aware that Allah Ta'ala is watching him.

On the other hand, certain states are gair-ikhtiari, namely that kaifiyat should come and that halate ajibah should manifest - it is not in the individual's power or choice to bring on emotional states and moods, and to produce states of a wondrous and ecstatic nature.

Why concern oneself with what is beyond one's power and choice? Why be desirous of such states? Why strive for them? Why be grieved at not being able to acquire them? Why be saddened if they vanish, should they have manifested?

15.ZIKR AND KAIFIYAT

It is important to understand the above. An improper understanding can cause the following situation:

An individual complained to me, "I cannot achieve a state of tearfulness. But I saw a person sitting in front of me making zikr in such a way that the tears were just flowing from his eyes." This individual is now upset and dejected. He does not understand that crying is not a voluntary feat (ikhtiari), but is an involuntary condition (gair-ikhtiari). If it comes, well and good. If not then there is no reason to long for it. Should you have the misconception that these states (kaifiyat) are

objectives to be pursued, then you are leading yourself into problems. You are going to become disillusioned with suluk. As a result you are going to cease your zikr because you now feel - quite wrongly - that your zikr is not producing any results.

Such misconceptions make the individual a prey for Shaitaan. Abdul Aziz Dabbar (r.a.) relates an incident:
The zakirin were busy making zikr in the khanqa of his sheikh. This is expected of those staying in the khanqa, that they should be punctual with their tahajjud namaz and zikr. What type of talib and salik is he who stays in the khanqa but does not get up for tahajjud and does not make zikr? He has come to the khanqa for these. He has freed himself from his worldly worries, he has left his business, he has left his family, so now he has the free time for these. One is surprised that he is still not punctual with his tahajjud and he is not persistent in his programme of zikr. Just what type of salik is he? No! The tahajjud and zikr are compulsory schedules whilst in the khanqa. Otherwise why come to the khanqa? To be lazy in these matters is a sign of disrespect. Illness or extreme physical weakness are valid excuses, but otherwise there is absolutely no reason for not getting up for tahajjud and not making zikr.

Abdul Aziz Dabbar (r.a.) as we said, narrated that the zakirin were busy making zikr in the khanqa. While making zikr one of the zakirin started crying. The sheikh noticed and said, "Oho! Shaitaan has arrived! The zakir is crying - Shaitaan has caught hold of his little finger." The crying of the zakir increased. The sheikh said, "Oho! Shaitaan has started to overpower him!" The crying of the zakir increased

still further, and went on for a long time. The sheikh said, "Oho! He is now completely in the power of Shaitaan!"

This incident is related by the great buzurg Abdul Aziz Dabbar (r.a.) in a kitab recently translated from the Arabic. The kitab is called "Talbise Iblis" (The Deceptions of Iblis - i.e. Shaitaan).

The comments of the sheikh appear strange. What is the reasoning behind his comments? Quite simple: Shaitaan has stopped the zakir from his basic objective, which is to remember Allah Ta'ala. Shaitaan has successfully diverted his attention, and has now directed him to the joy of crying. Shaitaan has got him so involved in the delight of shedding tears that his objective of remembering Allah Ta'ala has fallen by the way.

The lessons to be learnt: Do not run after kaifiyat; do not concern yourself with the fluctuations of these states; do not be deflected from your objective. Your objective is to connect yourself to your Creator and not to the creation. These states (kaifiyat) are, after all, part of creation.

To put it in technical terms: your duty is to be busy with shagl-ba-Haq and not shagle-ba-khalq. Shagl-ba-Haq is part of the a'male ikhtiariah akhlaqe mahmudiah (volitional deeds from amongst the praiseworthy qualities). Your duty is not to pursue what is gair-ikhtiari. Become indifferent to matters gair-ikhtiari, and maintain a mind that is tranquil and serene. This is exactly what Abdul Karim Jaili (r.a.) did, in obedience to the Qur'anic ayet:

"O ye who believe, when the call to prayer is made on a Friday then repair unto the remembrance of Allah...." S.62 A.9

He did what was in his power - to prepare for Jumu'ah and go as far as the prison gates. What was beyond his power - to cause the gates to open - he did not bother with.
Do you understand?

We started with one of our great auliya-Allah, Abul Hasan Nuri (r.a.), so let us go back to him. Before relating the main qissah connected with the theme "praise and censure" I wish to mention another incident related about him:
One day while in his house Abul Hasan Nuri (r.a.) suddenly cried out, "Offo! Offo! They have been killed! They have been killed!" His wife looked up in alarm. "What are you saying?" Abul Hasan Nuri (r.a.) had had an episode of kashf. He explained, "At a certain far-off place some people have been killed." The wife said, "Subhanallah! You know what happened at such a distant place, but are you aware that some thieves entered the house and what they did to your child? Of course not. Forget it. Don't come with your fancy stories."

That was just by-the-way.
We have already mentioned that the surname "Nuri" came about because a nur used to emanate from his mouth at times when he spoke. The nur was not seen every time, but only now and then. An important mas'alah of suluk is to be deduced from this: At times when no nur emanated from his mouth he did not feel that his zikr was now useless.

The point to remember is that the moment such a thought presents itself Shaitaan is there to mislead one. These masa'il of suluk are very important. It is imperative to know them. Otherwise one will not be able to defend oneself against the attacks of Shaitaan who tries to overpower us and lead us way from Haqiqat.

Still on the subject of "nur": Pirani saheba, Hadhratwala's (r.a.) wife, related that she saw a nur rising up from Hadhratwala's shahadat finger (index finger of the right hand). The nur rose upwards and spread itself towards the sky. This she witnessed shortly before his demise. The point I wish to make is that Hadhratwala (r.a.) had made zikr with his fingers his entire life, but this nur manifested itself only at that terminal stage of his life. This again underline the points made above.

The incident related by Pirani saheba comes as no surprise. Many years prior to this Hadhratwala (r.a.) had stated, "Alhamdulillah! It is a blessing of Allah Ta'ala." "And the bounty of your Lord, rehearse and proclaim" S.93. A.11.

"All the states that had been experienced by the earlier auliya-Allah have been experienced by me as well, except for one. I have never yet been in a state of engrossment (istigraq) like that experienced by Shah Abdulhaq Ladholwi saheb (r.a.). Though not essential, it would be nice to experience that state as well. There is no remorse, just a desire of the heart."

Shah Abdulhaq Ladholwi saheb (r.a.) is one of the auliya-Allah of our silsilah. He is well-known for his states of engrossment in the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala (istigraq). His absorption was such that he was forgetful of some of the most simple daily routines even.

In any event this state of istigraq was also experienced by Hadhratwala (r.a.) during his terminal illness:

Mufti Jamil saheb came to Hadhratwala's (r.a.) room to administer some medicine. "Barè Abba," he called softly. (Hadhratwala ---------- used to be addressed as "Bare Abba".)

There was no response. Mufti Jamil saheb called out in a louder voice, "Barè Abba!" Still no response. Now quite loudly, with his mouth close to the ear, "Barè Abba! Barè Abba!" Hadhratwala's (r.a.) eyes opened. He said, "The attention of one who is occupied should not be diverted to oneself."

What was Hadhratwala occupied with? Istigraq! Shagl-ba-Haq!

Not everybody experiences the same states. States differ, and individuals have their own unique experiences.

We have strayed somewhat from our topic of "praise and censure". Let us try again. The qissah we are about to relate about Abul Hasan Nuri (r.a.) also involves Bu Ali Sina, a physician of great repute.*1 Bu Ali Sina felt he should meet this famous buzurg of his time, namely Abul Hasan Nuri (r.a.). He thus undertook a journey to Abul Hasan Nuri's (r.a.) town and arrived at his residence. He knocked on the door and the wife answered the knock.

"Who is it?" she asked.

Bu Ali Sina introduced himself.

"What is it that you want?" she asked..

Very respectfully he said, "I have come to visit Hadhrat Sheikh Abul Hasan Nuri."

That was the last thing he should have said! The wife immediately started a tirade

against her own husband, censuring him in the harshest terms. The mildest quotable names she called him were: "a crook, a thief and a robber."

Bu Ali Sina was quite bewildered. Disappointed and regretful, he told himself, "It seems he is not what I thought him to be. I made a mistake in travelling all this way." He apologised and took his leave. "But," he thought to himself, "seeing I am here I may as well meet him." He enquired from some people about Abul Hasan Nuri's (r.a.) whereabouts. They explained that he normally went into the woods to collect firewood which he would sell in the bazaar. This is the manner in which he earned his livelihood.

Bu Ali Sina proceeded to the woods. After walking quite a distance he noticed a saintly looking person coming in his direction. What was amazing was that a lion was walking alongside him. Moreover, the lion was carrying a bundle of firewood. He realised immediately that this saintly person could be no other than Abul Hasan Nuri (r.a.).

Bu Ali Sina slowed down his pace and then stopped completely out of fear of the lion. Salaams were exchanged from a distance. Abul Hasan Nuri (r.a.) then said, "Bu Ali, are you afraid of the lion? He does not harm humans. You need not be afraid."

Bu Ali Sina was somewhat reassured and he approached nearer. "Hadhrat," he spoke deferentially "I had gone initially to your house to visit you. Your wife answered my knock. She enquired what I wanted. I merely replied that I had come to visit Hadhrat. But she started saying such horrible and disrespectful things about you that it was most embarrassing to stand and listen."

Abul Hasan Nuri (r.a.) offered an apology.

Bu Ali Sina continued, "But there is a strange thing that puzzles me."

Abul Hasan Nuri (r.a.) asked, "What is that?"

Bu Ali Sina said, "What I can't understand is that your wife has the upper hand over you. Yet you have the upper hand over this fierce lion!"

Abul Hasan Nuri (r.a.) said, "Arè mia! If one is unable to bear the burden imposed on one by that ewe, how is this lion going to bear our burden? It is because we carry the burden of her attitude that this lion bears our burden!"

Are you listening, children?

Praise and censure. The wife calls him horrible names. There is absolutely no acknowledgement of his saintly status from her. Only the heart of a wali can bear such censure. A mu'min wali, a wali in whom the demands of iman has caused him to leave off all sin and caused him to adopt piety (taqwa) and humility, a wali whose tongue and heart are engaged in constant zikr (zikr lisani and qalbi) so that his gaze is on the Creator and not on the creation, only such a wali will have the capacity for such wisdom. Remember the above well.

That person who does not have these qualities, is no man, just a mere kitten - he is no "mia", merely a "miauw".

Only that person whose gaze has shifted away from the creation and is now firmly fixed on the Creator treats praise and censure as being equal, irrespective of whether they come from his household or from outsiders. He is more tolerant to those close to him - censure rather than praise is to be expected more from them than from outsiders.

The one who is closest to him, the one who is labelled in the Hadith shareef as having a "naqise aql" (a defective intellect), namely his wife, will be the cause of such trials more than anybody else. Any individual with a "naqise aql" is incapable of seeing the consequences of his or her actions. Just look at other situations as well to see the truth of this. So the wife is the same - she will use her tongue with great liberty, unaware of the consequences.

A wali is that person to whom praise and censure are equal. Praise does not make him conceited. Censure does not produce any malice (keenah). Conceit is a sign of kibr (arrogance). Both of these, kibr and keenah, are internal evils. A wali is pure of internal illnesses - he has neither kibr nor keenah - so that praise and censure are treated as equal impostors.

We had mentioned that Hajee Imdadullah saheb (r.a.) was Hadhratwala's (r.a.) sheikh. He was also the sheikh of Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (r.a.).
A mureed is expected to write regularly to his sheikh. No letter had been received by Hajee saheb (r.a.) from Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (r.a.) for an unusually long period. Hajee saheb (r.a.) then took it upon himself to write to Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (r.a.):
"A time has elapsed. No letter has been received concerning my dear friend's condition. No notification of your states (ahwal) has been forthcoming."
Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (r.a.) wrote back: "States (ahwal) are for the sahebe-ahwal. Of what significance is this servant's condition? Yes, one thing though, now praise and censure are equal to me."
Hajee saheb (r.a.) wrote back: "Mubarak! Congratulations! My heart is happy.

Tajalli-af'ali has manifested itself." (The meaning of this will be explained in some future discourse, insha-Allah Ta'ala.) Hajee saheb (r.a.) was congratulating Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (r.a.) on a great achievement.

16.CONCLUSION

A number of topics have been discussed today. We have seen how the i'tiqadi hypocrites were given due consideration in those days; and how the amali hypocrites are also given due consideration today. Incidents showing Hajee saheb's (r.a.) and the dunyadar Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's attitudes to impostors have been related. Both showed exceptional qualities of loyalty and faithfulness (nibhahna).

Good qualities are not produced merely by the recitation of tasbihs, but flow from one who is a true wali. An item is recognised by the effects it produces.
The sheikh is constantly assessing how much and to what extent these effects manifest in the mureed. The sheikh does not look only at his namaz. Yes, in this era of our decline - these are days of our downward slide - the sheikh may content himself if some reach only a stage of performing namaz punctually and correctly. However, when a sheikh notices that a mureed is striving hard in suluk, the sheikh's attitude and treatment is accordingly different. The rare sight of a mureed making full effort during these days of degeneration gladdens the heart. Obviously such a mureed will be handled differently from one not so inclined.

Praise and censure have been discussed in detail: both should be equal in one's eyes. There should be no desire for praise; and censure should produce no ill-feelings. A wali is not perturbed by either. A sufficient number of incidents have

been related in this regard.

A qissah concerning Abdul Karim Jaili (r.a.) has also been related to illustrate the role of effort in matters ikhtiari and gair-ikhtiari. The topic of zuhd was also dealt with in-between.

A perspective on zikr and kaifiyat was given. It was also stressed that a khanqa is a place where one should be punctual with tahajjud and zikr. A khanqa is also a place where tranquillity (sukun) descends. Therefore there should be tranquillity and serenity of body and soul, of tongue and heart. Just as khushu' is essential for the perfection and acceptance of one's namaz, khushu' is the desired state out of namaz: Kiushu' should be constantly with us.

Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) made a du'a,

"O Allah! Verily, I seek refuge in You from a heart wherein there is no Kiushu'...."

May Allah Ta'ala give us all the tawfiq, with sidq and ikhlas, to spend our time properly, whether in the khanqa, at home or outside.

Chapter No.:

4

1. Foreword

2. Rushing Headlong

3. Qurbe-ilahi - Closeness to Allah

4. Hafiz-real and Ramadhani

1.FOREWORD

This fourth booklet in this series has now been published through the barkat and duas of Hadhratjee.

It is exactly two years since the first booklet was published, and booklets two and three followed shortly thereafter. Those readers who have attempted to follow the guidance in these booklets would have made considerable progress during this period. It is hoped that this fourth booklet will also assist readers in their progress, insha'allah ta'ala.

In reading the discourses of Hadhratjee, two points will have become quite obvious to the reader:

Firstly, that these discourses do not fall in the category of "casual reading", but require careful and concentrated reading. In other words, they require careful study.

Secondly, that there are certain technical terms that are used time and again. A knowledge and understanding of these terms lead to greater appreciation and enjoyment of the discourses.

There is a third point worth mentioning, a point which those who have been fortunate enough to actually sit in Hadhratjee's majalis will vouchsafe: The height of appreciation and enjoyment comes from listening with the correct frame of mind. Many have experienced such exultation as to verge on ecstasy when listening to Hadhratjee. This effect is not conveyed in these paraphrased translations, unfortunately. Nevertheless, the correct frame of mind is still essential to get the most out of these discourses.

A majlis held by a sheikh of tariqat has some special features. It is appropriate to repeat some important points concerning a majlis:

- A majlis does not follow the pattern of a lecture. A lecture on a subject will have a systematic explanation of all aspects of that subject. A majlis, on the other hand, is an informal talk. There may or may not be a theme around which the talk unfolds, but the topics discussed may change from minute to minute.

- The object of the talk is to provide answers to the problems faced by those attending the talk. (How the sheikh provides the right answers is a discussion on its own!)

- It obviously follows that those attending have come in search of answers leading to their self-rectification (islah). As the answers may appear at any moment, and may appear in an unexpected way, each and every sentence uttered by the sheikh has to be listened to with the greatest of concentration.

- The sheikh may punctuate his talk with a number of rhetoric questions, where the answers are quite obvious. This technique is used very skillfully by Hadhratjee.

- Another technique used by Hadhratjee is to speak in the first person when explaining an ayet. (In the translation these have been put in quotation marks, but it must not be thought that these are verbatim quotations from kitabs of tafsir.)

Bearing all this in mind, the suggestion is made that the reader should read each paragraph as an entity on its own, as well read it as part of the general theme. Whenever a question appears, the reader should stop to ponder what point Hadhratjee is putting forward. And, at all times, the reader should be alert to the deficiency within himself that may need correction. Any points not quite clear should be clarified with an Alime Haqqani.

Attempts have been made to improve the presentation in these booklets. A heartfelt thanks to those who gave feedbacks and constructive suggestions. Gratitude is also expressed to those who assisted with the corrections and kitabit - Jazakumullah fi darein. Dr. Ismaiel Mangera

2.RUSHlNG HEADLONG

(This discourse was delivered by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Maseehullah Khan Saheb on Tuesday, the 25th of Ramadhân 1409, corresponding with the 2nd May 1989, in Jalalabad, India.)

The beginning of it is mercy, the middle of it is forgiveness, and the ending of it is freedom from the fire of Jahannam.(Hadith)

This month of Ramadhân is a month of extra mercy, of special forgiveness, of bounteous hosting, of great calmness, and of great blessings.

These special features of Ramadhan are derived by a subtle use of the word "Ra-ma-dh-a-n" as an acronym in the following manner:

Ra - standing for rahmat (mercy)

Ma- standing for magfirat (forgiveness)

Dh - standing for dhiafat (hosting)

A - standing for ulfat (affection) / unsiat (calmness)

N u- standing for ne'mat (blessings)

Allah Ta'ala's rahmat and magfirat are special in this month. Dhiafat: one is a guest of Allah Ta'ala Who provides for His servant. Ulfat and unsiat: affection between one another and with Allah Ta'ala. If there was no serenity who would stay hungry

the whole day, and then still perform 20 rakats namaz of tarawih at night additionally? Ne'mat: blessings are to be seen everywhere. Just see what delicacies are placed before you at the time of breaking fast.

Besides the food, there are blessings visible elsewhere - in one's ibadat and obedience: one's tilawat, one's zikr, one's tasbihat are all performed in abundance.

One sees the Mu'min rising early for sehri, and then rushing to perform his Fajr namaz with jama't, eager to fulfill the rights of the shariat, the rights of Allah Ta'ala.

That Great Being, that infinite Non-particular Omniscient One has seen this small, finite, particular human eagerly rushing forth to fulfill His edicts - such zeal for obedience! - and He has taken him into His lap! The Infinite Being now sacrifices for this finite devotee.

The pre-requisite, of course, is that this finite human is a devotee of that calibre. If so, then there is no reason why the Master should not be ready to sacrifice for His servant.

3.QURBE ILAHI - CLOSENESS TO ALLAH

You have all heard of King Mahmud Ghaznavi and his slave Ayaz. The devotion of Ayaz to his master is legendary. In return for such dedication King Mahmud Ghaznavi was ready to sacrifice himself for his slave (if you only but knew!) Ayaz's devotion was such that he sacrificed himself at every command of the king. This was the basis for the king's reciprocal attitude.

However, take note of the sequence: first comes dedication and sacrifice from the

slave; then only will his turn come for the special mercy and sacrifice of the master.

Of course, the purpose of sacrifice on the part of the slave is to attain qurb, otherwise it is deception. As the Qur'an shareef states:

Do not let this dunya beguile you (S.31 A.33)

This world has its distractions: pomp, lustre, adornments and beauties. It should not be that the orders of Allah Ta'ala are directing you in one direction and you are sacrificing in the opposite direction.

Therefore, that human, that servant-slave of Allah Ta'ala should be ready to sacrifice to fulfill the orders of his Master. He should not give precedence to the orders of anybody else, and never, but never, act according to the orders of others in conflict with the orders of his Master. We are speaking of sacrifice of the servant-slave's inner being, his heart, his limbs and the rest of his body. Neither mentally, nor physicality, nor financially should he sacrifice at anybody else's command. Sacrifice should only be for the orders of his Master.

Note that it is Allah Ta'ala who has initially sought out His servant. Allah Ta'ala says, "I am near to you already..."

The relevant Qur'anic ayet is as follows:

We are nearer to him than his jugular vein. (S.50 A. 16)

Allah Ta'ala is saying, "I am near to you already, but you also show that you are near to Me. My nearness is an established fact. It is you who have distanced

yourself from Me!"

The servant-slave accepts this fact. "Then how can one get close?"

In the following manner: "Any command that originates from Me should penetrate your heart in such a way that your whole body, each and every part of it, should succumb to that command and act accordingly."

From the wide spectrum of commands one set of commands concern mu'asharat also. That, in this world social relationships, contact between one another, should be of ease and comfort, one of "ishrat", "ishrat" being the root of the word "mu'asharat". It is taken for granted that the Mu'min will have a pleasurable stay in Jannat in the Hereafter. "But, no!" Allah Ta'ala is saying, "Even in this world a pleasurable life, a life of ease and comfort, the life of a Jannati, is specially reserved for the Mu'min and not for anybody else!"

However if the Mu'min is running helter-skelter away from iman, then there is no question of his enjoying that special lifestyle (and whatever it entails) of ease and comfort.

Allah Ta'ala has stated in the Qur'an shareef that this world is also meant for you, 0 Mu'min. As for the Hereafter it is undoubtedly solely for you as well.

Say thou: Who hath forbidden the adornment which Allah hath produced for His servants and the good things of His providing? Say thou: Such, on the Day of Resurrection, will be only for those who believed during the life of the world. (S.7 A.32)

Whatever others are getting, whatever the gair-Mu'mins (non-Believers) are enjoying, is solely through the mediation of the Mu'min. The Mu'min is the original and real recipient of the bounties of Allah Ta'ala, and the gair-Mumin is getting his bit through your intercession. The day you, 0 Mu'min, cease to exist, your intercession will also cease. All the various ways and means that the ease and comfort were brought to you, will also cease. A full and complete life of ease and comfort was meant for you, 0 Mu'min, because you sacrificed yourself at each and every command of Allah Ta'ala. When you do not remain here anymore, the bounties will also disappear.

Allah Ta'ala has stated that He is near to you already, but you are not near to Him. On hearing this, this human being is devastated. "What is it that I must do to get close?" he asks anxiously.
Allah Ta'ala says, "It is simply to obey My commands. When you obey My commands, your remoteness will be replaced by closeness (qurb). As stated, My qurb is there already. It is now in your ikhtiar - you have the choice."

Concerning the commands of Allah Ta'ala, a set of commands relate to mu'asharat - social relationships. It is in relation to mu'asharat that an ayet of the Qur'an shareef has come to mind:

4.HAFIZ - REAL AND RAMADHANI

I am not a hafiz. However, what should the reaction of a hafiz be when he hears these few phrases? A proper hafiz - not a "Ramadhani" hafiz, who is somebody else - a proper hafiz will immediately recite to himself what precedes and what

follows these few phrases.

The reaction of an alim hafiz is different. (An alim hafiz is one who is an alim as well as a hafiz). Instead of merely reciting the preceding and following sections, the meaning of these phrases also immediately run through his mind. He identifies and translates the ayet immediately, and tells himself, "Aha! This is what is meant." This is a real hafiz.

So, what is a "Ramadhani" hafiz? Well, he is somebody who waits for Ramadhan to approach, and in the preceding months of Rajah and Shaban he hastily prepares himself to recite the Qur'an shareef in Ramadhan. He then sits back till the following Ramadhan. I am giving a lesson. There may be a hafiz or two who have come here and, very daringly, are sitting here. So, listen carefully:

A hafiz who has the time and opportunity should recite at least one manzil of the Qur'an shareef daily, i.e. one - seventh of the Qur'an shareef.

If he cannot manage one manzil, he should recite at least two paras daily.

This advice comes incidentally. Let us carry on with the ayet I had started reciting. Kindly complete it for me.

Shukria: That is the way to recite.

[This comment was directed at those who had recited the ayet for Hadhratjee.]

Let us stop there.

This morning, before the majlis commenced we saw how everybody rushed headlong to come and sit in the majliskhana. This happens daily. Once I commented, What would people say at your mad rush to come in?" Some of you

explained that the reason for the rush was that each person was trying to get a place right in front.

Well, the intention is commendable. It is called tanafus - that is, taking the lead in achieving something good to surpass others.

5.ASSABIQUNA - THOSE IN FRONT Allah Ta'ala says:

And the foremost in the race, the foremost in the race: Those are they who will be brought nigh. (S.56 A.10/1)

Which reminds me of the following incident which is worth pondering over.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) instructed a small group of four Sahaba (RA), "Depart immediately for a certain place. As far as possible, try and reach there by this time." A time was specified.

These instructions are vital, so let me repeat them: Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) ordered four Sahaba (RA) to depart immediately for a certain place. As far as possible they had to reach there by the time specified by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

It was a Friday. The time for Jumu'ah namaz came and the namaz was performed by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). After the namaz, one of the four Sahaba presented himself before Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to make salam and musafah (shake hands) before departing on his mission.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) commented, "I had instructed four of you to depart. You are alone. What happened to the other three?"

The Sahabi (RA) replied, " The other three had saddled their horses and had left at

that time."

"And you?"

The Sahabi (RA) said, "I thought to myself that today is Friday and there is great virtue in attending the Jumu'ah namaz. Because of a tremendous desire to acquire the virtues attached to this namaz, I did not depart immediately. A further temptation was the blessing of performing namaz behind you. The intense desire to attain these cumulative virtues made me stay behind and not depart then."

Let us analyse his attitude: The Sahabi (RA) is saying that those deeds which are greater in virtue and blessings, logically, will be means of greater qurbe ilahi i.e. the degree of qurb is proportional to the degree of virtuous deeds performed.

The virtues he was counting on were that of attending the Jumu'ah namaz and being led in the namaz by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

The Sahabi (RA) continued his explanation:

"I have a horse that is faster than those of my companions. I will now depart and easily catch up with them along the way, and still reach our destination with them. In this way I will have attained the virtues of Jumu'ah here, as well as carrying out your instruction to reach our destination at the time specified."

Do you understand the points the Sahabi (RA) made? He wished to acquire the blessings of the Jumu'ah namaz, led by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), as well as that of carrying out his earlier instruction.

Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Whatever you have said, has its merits, However, you have not obeyed my instructions to the letter. Therefore you have not acquired the qurb that the other three have acquired"

The lesson is "wassabiqunas sabiqun aula-ekal muqarrabun." Which is to say that the qurbe ilahi that the other three had attained by departing immediately, thus fulfilling the order of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to the letter, this Sahabi (RA) had not attained.

You should understand this well, and safeguard yourself from merely fulfilling your desires. Merely giving expression to one's inner feelings is meaningless in relation to a specific instruction. These are points to turn over in one's mind, points to ponder over. On the surface what a beautiful intellectual argument, with proofs, was presented by the Sahaba' (RA): virtues of Jumu'ah, of performing namaz behind Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and, at the same time, the virtue of arriving at their destination according to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) 's instruction. Despite this Rasulullah (sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that he had not attained the qurb that his companions had attained by leaving immediately.

We can safely conclude: in the face of nas, there is no value to ijtihad. In other words, in the face of explicit instructions from Allah Ta'ala or His Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), one's own deductions and conclusions are meaningless. This Sahabi (RA) had used ijtihad (his own deductions and conclusions) in the face of nas, the specific instruction of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), to depart immediately.

No matter how many virtues are attached to a particular action, and no matter how much qurb is attached to those virtues, these fade into insignificance in the face of obedience (ittibay'et). To repeat: ijtihad is meaningless in the face of nas.
It is apparent that ittibay'et is basic. It is fundamental. Nothing is attained by mere expression of affection.

A further conclusion one can draw from this is:
In the face of a command by ones senior, one should not be self-opinionated.
Of course, it goes without saying that the person who is one's senior or elder, is accepted as such and not merely recognised as such. There is a difference. A person acting on his own deductions and conclusions is merely gratifying his own desires. He is merely satisfying his own passions. He feels his progress lies in following his own viewpoint, that his line of action is good for him. In that case how can one say he has accepted his senior as such? His verbal acknowledgement of his senior is meaningless. Accepting someone as one's senior and elder is to be obedient to him, provided that he is not commanding one to commit sins by disobeying Allah Ta'ala's orders.
Therefore, in the face of a command by one's senior, if one puts forward one's own deductions, one will only land oneself in unnecessary problems. Then, can one expect one's senior to come to one's assistance?

The Sahabi (RA), on face value, had a good and perfectly logical intellectual argument. But it was contrary to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)'s instruction. The final verdict of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was that he had not attained the taqarrub ilallah which the other three had attained, even

though they were deprived of attending the Jumu'ah namaz led by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

To re-iterate: the basis of qurb is ittiba'yet! This point is emphasised time and again in the Qur'an shareef.

Say (0 Muhammad, to mankind): If you love Allah, follow me. (S.3 A.31)
Whoso obeyeth the messenger obeyeth Allah,
and whoso turneth away:
We have not sent thee as a warder over them. (S.4 A.80)

0 ye who believe! Obey Allah and His messenger and turn not away from him when ye hear him (speak). (S.8 A.20)

The crux of the matter is: do not intellectualize (i.e. do not put forward your own deductions and conclusions) in the face of an instruction from your senior and elder.

We had drifted to this topic when speaking of the headlong rush to sit in the majliskhana. An ayet of the Qur'an shareef was recited earlier wherein Allah Ta'ala is instructing us about mu'asharat. The root of the word "mu'asharat" is "ishrat", which means gaiety/happy social life/pleasurable. We are thus to spend our life in this world in "aysh-wa-ishrat" - in gaiety and happiness; in delightful ease and comfort; in peace and tranquility with one another.

Mu'asharat is dependant on a compatible relationship; and relationships are dependant on acceptable behaviour from all sides. Each person should have such a relationship with the next person that there is nothing but sheer joy and comfort.

There should be no displeasure. Relationships should be full of ease - not disease! One should avoid harshness in speech and action. One's words and the tone of one's voice should be such as to convey ease and comfort, otherwise the desired mu'asharat is disrupted.

6.PARENTS

The ayet recited pertains to rushing headlong as well. We will come to that. The ayet, however, starts off with:

(Show) kindness unto parents

One's behaviour towards one's parents should be such that one does not incur their slightest displeasure. One should not allow unpleasantness to develop between them and oneself. That is how one should live with one's parents.

In the entire creation, after Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), of course, the status of the rights of one's parents as far as obedience is concerned, supercedes the rights of all others! To this degree:-

You are in the house making ibadat, performing nafl namaz or reciting the Qur'an shareef. Your father is ill. He calls you. Interrupt your ibadat, break your namaz, and run to attend to him immediately.

To repeat: in the entire creation, the pre-eminence that the rights of one's parents enjoy, no other creation's rights can match. This pre-eminence has been determined by Allah Ta'ala. The status of one's mother and father is such that one's relationship with them should be of the utmost cordiality and kindness. One should not cause them the slightest harm, grief or upset.

Yet, what do we see?

- The son utters such words as to hurt them.

- Their hard-earned money kept safely in the cupboard, is taken away quietly by the son. Their pockets are emptied. When the money is needed they find no money in their pockets, and the box in the cupboard is also empty. Who has taken the money? Understandably, they are most upset and in a ' state of panic. The son has not only caused them financial loss but also mental anguish.

Yes, you may find a parent who is an Allah-wala. His reaction is different. He remains unruffled. "Somebody or other must have taken the money. Let him be." His attitude is indifferent. He sees it from another angle: 'Money is a perishable item. As far as needs are concerned the greater need will be in the Hereafter! I forgive the poor fellow who took the money, for I will be adequately compensated for my loss in the Hereafter." The Allah-wala does not have to think. This response is automatic.

Those who are Allah-wala, the ahlullah, do come across such situations. These are situations involving tarbiyet (character training). It is in this light that the response of the ahlullah is mentioned, so that you may be aware of it.

It has been written that once the ahlullah have established a proper connection with Allah Ta'ala, a true ta'alluq ma'allah, then, no matter what befalls them, they are not upset in the least. If an ahlullah does get upset, it is a clear indication that he has not established that connection (ta'alluq) with Allah Ta'ala which is the desired connection. Once an ahlullah has established a proper connection with Allah Ta'ala, there is absolutely no question of his getting upset!

Toil and labour are connected with one's physical body, but being upset is a condition of the heart. A real ahlullah, one who has established the proper connection with Allah Ta'ala, will have absolutely no reason to be upset within himself. This is one of the effects of ta'alluq ma'allah. This is what differentiates him from one who does not have this ta'alluq. Otherwise there would be no apparent difference between the two.

7.THE FOUR QUESTIONS OF BABA FARID SHAKR GANJ (RA)

Which reminds me of Baba Farid Shakr Ganj (RA). As some of you may know, he was a great scholar and sufi. He was the khalifa of Hadhrat Qutbuddin Bukhtiar Kaki (RA), and went on to become a great sheikh himself.

Baba Farid Shakr Ganj (RA) related the following in his majlis:
"I have met some 600 auliya-allah."
(Note: A person has only one sheikh to whom he turns to for his is/ah (self-rectification. However, in that amazing era people undertook long journeys on foot. It was not unusual for them to meet several buzurgs from time to time during such journeys, but they were not given the status of one's sheikh).

8.THE FIRST QUESTION

"I put a set of questions to all of them. The first question was: 'Who is an aqil (intelligent person)?
"All 600 gave the same reply: 'An aqil is one who recognises his aqa'."

An intelligent person is one who recognises his Lord. In worldly matters it is essential for a slave to know his master. If a slave does not recognise this simple

fact then haw would he experience happiness in this world?

This recognition is even more important when it comes to our Real Master. This recognition is called ma'rifat.

All 600 auliya-allah whom Baba Farid Shakr Ganj (RA) questioned at various times, all separately gave the same reply. This consensus is called "ijma", and ijma is binding.

So, the consensus of all 600 auliya-allah was that an aqil, an intelligent person, is one who recognises his aqa, his Lord and Master. In other words an aqil is one who has ma'rifat. Now, what is marifat.

Very briefly, without going into long explanations, ma'rifat is to recognise the different qualities of Allah Ta'ala in detail, and to act constantly and consistently according to this knowledge. A person endowed with ma'rifat will be called an arif billah. An aqil will thus be an arifbillah.

However, nowadays a completely different meaning is given to the word aqil in everyday conversation. Every shrewdy, every trickster, every cheat, every fraud - any person who knows how to get his own over others - is called an aqil, a clever person. "He is very clever", is what we hear about such persons. "He knows how to get his way." In modern terminology, the unintelligent are called intelligent, the mindless are said to be clever.

The real meaning of aqil has been stated above - an intelligent person is one who recognises his Lord and Master. The intelligence of the auliya-allah is superior to that of any other group. The fact that 600 auliya-allah testified to the above

definition of an aqil shows an unsurpassable consensus of those who are really intelligent.

9.THE SECOND QUESTION

"The second question I put forward was the following:" Baba Farid Shakr Ganj (RA) continued:

"Who is called hushyar?"

Seeing we have present here today some noted scholars, let me explain: "Hushyar" is an adjective derived from two Persian words, "Hush" and "yar" "Hush" means "sense / consciousness." "Yaristan" means to be of strength. Combining the two words we arrive at the following meaning; "one who has strength of mind; one who is sensible."

What was the reply to the question: "Who is hushyar?" "All 600 auliya-allah gave the same reply: 'Hushyar is one who is not upset (pareshan) in any situation.'"

This answer is of great practical value. After hearing this reply and bearing it in mind, we should look within ourselves and take stock. What is our state when matters go against our temperament? Day and night we face situations which we find unpleasant - gee desire matters to proceed according to our wishes and just the opposite happens. What is our reaction?

The word "pareshan" is also Persian, again a combination of two words. "Paridan"which means "to fly off", and "shan" which means "state/condition". "Pareshan" will thus mean: "his condition/state has flown off' i.e. He is not calm and serene. He is now disturbed and perturbed, anxious and frightened, ensnared,

etc.

Allah forbid, but should you find yourself in such a situation in the future, sit down and think for a while: "What is it that I heard in the majlis here? Why were these topics discussed in such detail, with illustrations and anecdotes? What was my purpose in going to listen to these talks? So, why am I not acting according to the advice? Why am I not training my temperament accordingly? Why am I not drawing my temperament to a position of strength? Why this insipid and lack-lustre condition? Why this dejection? Why am I not in control of my mood? Why cannot I direct my thoughts more positively? Why am I testifying to my weakness? Why am I showing cowardice?"

Do you understand?

A person in a position of responsibility will encounter such situations more than others. The moment a problem arises, the person becomes ruffled. This is sufficient proof that he is not hushyar. This responsible person, this manager, this man who is now a father, this newly appointed principal, is now pareshan. His temperament is out of control. He is anxious and perturbed. He is unable to think clearly. He cannot bear the upset. His inner turmoil is apparent to everybody.

These are important matters to bring to your attention, especially in this age, where such situations are met with frequently by the ihle-ilm (scholars). A person in a position of responsibility should have an even temperament (a mustaqil mizag), and a strong heart. He should be hushyar. He should be circumspect, taking into account all aspects of a situation, in front, behind, above, below and both sides.

Is the message getting through? Are these not important topics to discuss? If you had come here expecting me to ask "Now much muraqabah did you do today? What is your hal (state) during muraqabah (meditation)? How much zikr did you make? 3000 or 10.000? So much! Well done! If that is what you were expecting me to ask, I am sorry to disappoint you!

Dear Mu'min, do not only build your Akhirat, but build your Dunya as well! This world is a reflection of Jannat for you, provided you live as you should be living. As for Jannat, it is already there for you.

These are topics we heard discussed by our Hadhratwala (Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanvi R.A.). Why did he discuss them? Not for entertainment - it was no cinema! These topics were discussed to direct and develop one's thinking along certain lines; to bring firmness in one's mind, to teach the appropriate mu'asharati lifestyle of ease and comfort, according to place and person.

The individual, and especially one in a position of responsibility, should know how to act correctly in any particular situation. He should not panic when confronted by an unexpected problem and blurt out, "No. No. I can't do it. This task is beyond me. Ask someone else."
Subhanallah! What courage! What bravery!
He is easily ruffled. His composure is gone. He is uncontrolled. His facial expression has lost its equanimity. His words are hasty. His whole attitude portrays his fright.

Be hushyar! Do not be perturbed by any situation. This quality is connected with one's heart and mind. As stated already, toil and effort are connected with the physical body, and is associated with physical tiredness. To be perturbed and panic-stricken, to feel crushed, is a condition of the heart. This persons body may be strong, but his heart is weak. I have seen great wrestlers with massive, sturdy physiques getting frightened when confronted by one less massive and sturdy. As stated, fear and panic arise from the heart and not one's physique.

So, who is hushyar? One who panics? One who feels crushed? One who loses control of himself? No. Definitely not! Hushyar is one who is not perturbed by any situation.

10.THE BOY AND THE ELEPHANT

Hadhratwala related an incident to us to illustrate this: an elephant from the king's palace had suddenly become wild. It broke loose and was on a rampage, heading for the village. The local people were quickly informed, and warned to stay indoors. The village shops were hurriedly closed. In next to no time the streets were empty. But a young boy got left outside, and the rampaging elephant was headed straight for the child. The boy saw the elephant thundering towards him. What to do? A pup was lying nearby, unaware of the impending catastrophe. The boy acted quickly. He grabbed the pup by one of its legs, twirled the pup around his head for it to gain momentum and then hurled it directly at the raging elephant. The startled pup hit the elephant on the face and started yelping loudly. The elephant in turn became startled at this and came to a sudden halt. Its attention got

diverted to the squealing, clawing pup on its trunk, and the elephant actually started backing away.

Hadhratwala's comment was, 'Look, he was only a boy, but he was hushyarl'
The stampeding elephant did not get him to panic. He did not lose his wits. His senses and composure were maintained, and an excellent manouvre to stop the elephant came to mind. A massive, raging elephant was repelled by a small quick-thinking boy making use of a little pup.
A small, weak boy succeeded in a major task, and the massive, strong elephant failed in its purpose of destroying the little boy. Allah Ta'ala had placed the strategy into the boy's mind whereby he got saved.

When one maintains one's composure and one does not allow one's senses to become disarrayed, the greatest task will be easily solved, insha'allah ta'ala. A special characteristic of being hushyar is the effect it has on one's thinking. Allah Ta'ala has made it a feature of keeping cool and calm that a plan will come to mind appropriate to the situation, to bring success to one's affairs. Try this exercise: think back. Try and visualise any such situation in the past where you were thrown into panic. Ask yourself, "Had I known then what I have learnt today would I still have been panic-stricken? Would I still have been restless and upset? Would I still have sat down uselessly, or crept into bed and hid under the blankets?"
Your answer should be, "Of course not! Had I known then what I know today, I would not have got into such a state!" There may be some of you sitting here who had to face such situations in the past, and you should be thinking as I have just outlined. There may be others who may face such situations in the future (Allah

forbid), in which case you should make use of these talks and not become upset and panic-stricken. Problems may arise from any direction: from one's wife or children, or from one's students, or one's servants or employees, or one's employer or superior. One's resolve should be to control ones temperament and gain the upperhand over one's thoughts by putting into practice what one has heard here today. Insha-allah ta'ala. In this way you will not allow yourself to be crushed or overwhelmed, or allow your serenity to be disturbed, or give an opportunity for others to mock you. Insha-allah ta'ala.

We are still discussing Baba Farid Shakr Ganj (RA)'s second question "Who is hushyar?" All 600 gave the same reply, "One who is not pareshan in any situation." We are humans, and we are bound to encounter difficulties. However, bearing in mind the measures to safeguard oneself and acting promptly on these, we will not go off the track. Or if there is someone there to prompt one, then too one will be assured of overcoming the difficulty.

11.THE BATTLE OF UHUD

I am reminded of the Battle of Uhud. Khalid Bin Walid, who had not accepted Islam as yet, was in command of the Qurayshi cavalry. He was a great statesman and strategist. He saw a breach in the defences of the Muslims, grabbed the opportunity and attacked from behind, causing a severe setback to the Muslims. During the reversal Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was injured on the head and one tooth became shahid. The ranks of the Sahaba (RA) were in disarray. A loud cry went up from the enemy lines. "Qad mate Muhammedun." They announced that they had killed Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). You can

now imagine the condition of the Sahaba (RA). Their success was turning into defeat. Many lives were being lost. Their ranks were in disarray as the enemy attacked from behind and in front. And now this announcement! Their love for Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was such that this cry from the enemy shattered their very hearts! If Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was gone, what was there left for them?

However, another cry also went up, "Look! Look! Here comes Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)!" The Sahaba (RA) turned around and saw Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) coming forward. On seeing him, the change in the Sahaba (RA) was dramatic. Their despondency changed to jubilation. Their spirits were regained and their disarray turned to orderliness. They quickly grouped themselves around Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and attacked the enemy with regained fervour, driving the enemy back. Defeat turned to victory. A temporary upset, a short-lived confusion, was replaced with sense and success on seeing Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). There were some among the Sahaba (RA) who had kept calm and had said, "Even if Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is martyred, Allah Ta'ala is alive!" Allah Ta'ala states in the Qur'an shareef.

Muhammad is but a messenger, messengers (the like of whom) have passed away before him. Will it be that, when he dies or is slain, you will turn back on your heels? (S.3 A.144)

If Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) were to pass away, will you leave your iman and turn back? Allah is alive. You have brought iman for Him. There were Ambiya before this, and they also passed away.

The Sahaba (RA) were always calm and collected. This was how they were trained, to be hushyar. The disarray at the Battle of Uhud was short-lived. The depth of their grief was such that it caused a momentary lapse. A temporary weakness showed, but not of such a nature as to throw them completely off-balance. That moment passed, and they were as before, calm and collected.
There may be some students who may have had some doubts arising in their minds when reading about the Battle of Uhud. The above explanation should suffice to dispel those doubts.

Do you understand?
I keep on asking whether you understand, because these are lessons. This is a type of class being conducted for students. What students? Anyone seeking tarbiyet, anyone seeking his islah, anyone desiring to develop courage and bravery, anyone seeking Islamic sturdiness.

12.THE POWER OF THOUGHT

These are prescriptions. Just as one finds medical prescriptions for bodily ailments, these are prescriptions for illnesses affecting the heart. These prescriptions are of great value, greater than any elixir of gamirah-gaza-ambr and mushk. These elixirs are undoubtedly of value, invigorating the body, but our prescriptions are greater in value. How is that? By causing one to conquer one's thoughts! Gamirah-gaza-ambr

and mushk will cause the body to become strong. Our prescriptions will cause the heart to become strong. Combine the two and you have strength on strength. Conquering one's thoughts is an amazing feat and is greater in importance.

Here is a personal experience: In days gone by, I lived across the courtyard where Bhaijan now stays. I used to sleep alone. (Also, I used to travel alone, until I suffered a short illness. The doctors then stopped me from travelling alone or even sleeping in a room by myself.) As I was saying, I was asleep when I felt as if something had bitten me. My eyes opened. I felt a tingling in my foot. A fearful thought (wehm) crossed my mind: Did a snake bite me?

Remember that wehm (doubt/ groundless fear) is a force in opposition to aql (intelligence). These two forces are called Quwate Wehmia and Quwate Aqlia respectively. Should the force of doubt (quwate wehmia) progressively increase in a person, it becomes an illness which is very difficult to cure or control.

This thought that it could have been a snake that had bitten me, together with the tingling sensation in the foot, had an upsetting effect on me. I got up, opened the door and started climbing upstairs. Bhaijan was staying upstairs. Having climbed up a few steps, I told myself, "What nonsense is this? Why disturb somebody for nothing, especially seeing he is asleep? Did you see a snake?" I climbed down and went back to bed. But then the same thought came back: What if it were a snake? I got up again, opened the door and started climbing up again. Again, I stopped and scolded myself. I retraced my steps and went back to bed.

This happened a few times. Then I took a grip on myself and told myself firmly: It

must have been a mouse. There are mice round and about. Nothing happens with a bite from a mouse. I firmly held on to this thought and overpowered my other thought. The final result was that the burning and tingling in my foot disappeared and I slept soundly thereafter!
With taw0q from Allah Ta'ala, and with the barkat of my sheikh, one thought had conquered another thought. We had heard such talks from our sheikh, just as you are hearing such talks today.

Thoughts have a very powerful influence on a person. A number of incidents spring to mind. You just keep on listening! Hadhratwala related the following:
A farmer had finished ploughing his land. The ploughshare had gone loose and the farmer, carrying the plough on his head, took it to the blacksmith to be axed. As he handed the plough over he commented, "I had this plough on my head and it felt as if something had bitten me. What could it have been? It must have been something or other." He dismissed the matter from his mind. The blacksmith took the plough to his workshop. As he wiggled the loose ploughshare he noticed a little snake in one of the crevices. He quickly smothered the snake and killed it there and then, and went on to fix the ploughshare. The blacksmith brought back the plough and handed it to the farmer without making mention of the snake. The farmer took the plough and went home.
The following year the farmer was back with the plough. The blacksmith pulled the loose ploughshare out and the remains of the dead snake fell out.
The farmer stepped back in fright and cried out, "What's this?" The simple blacksmith naively said, "It's a dead snake. This is the very thing that bit you last

year." "This snake bit me? A snake! A snake..." The farmer's voice tailed off and he collapsed. He was carried home where he died shortly afterwards. You will note that at the time of the snake-bite he was not affected. A year later the overwhelming power of the thought of a snake-bite killed him.

What lessons were not taught to us by Hadhratwala! He prepared his khuddam (attendants) not only for the Hereafter, but refined them for this world as well! Do not be hasty and come out half-baked. Allah Ta'ala has created a potential force within yourself, which is the power of thought (quwate khialiah). Take work from it and do not waste it. Use it properly, on the right occasions. Do not be infirm in your thinking. Be forceful (pakka).

Here is another qissah which we heard from the lips of Hadhratwala:

It was Ramadhan shareef, and the hafiz saheb was reciting the Qur'an shareef in tarawih. A certain simple - minded person was also attending the tarawih. He told the people that the day Surah Yasin shareef was to be recited, they should inform him beforehand. The people forgot and the hafiz saheb came to Yasin shareef and recited beyond. One day this person asked, "So many days have passed and we have not reached Yasin shareef yet?" The people said, "Why not? Yasin shareef was recited some time back and hafiz saheb is way beyond." He asked, "Was I present when Yasin shareef was recited?" The people said, "Why not? You were here every night. How could you have missed it?"
The simple - minded person was dismayed, "I was here when Yasin shareef was recited! I won't be able to save myself now!"

The reason for his dismay was the following: He had seen on a number of occasions that when a person is dying, people read Yasin shareef. Of course, this is done to ease the death of the person, to allow the rooh to leave the body without difficulty. This person saw Yasin shareef being recited and the person over whom it was recited, died. The thought became fixed in the person's mind that, that person who listens to Yasin shareef will die. If he were to hear Yasin shareef he would die. Obviously, reason and logic had nothing to do with it.

This thought was so overpowering that he fell unconscious. He was carried home but he did not recover, and passed away.

These incidents are rarities, but they adequately illustrate the potential power of thought and serve as valuable lessons. These discussions lend strength to one's thinking. On the appropriate occasion these talks will bring calmness and serenity within the person.

Inner strength is not dependant on changing the thinking of the next person. No. One should change one's own thinking with the power of one's own thoughts. (I have already mentioned my personal experience.) This produces tremendous inner strength. However, we find people sitting down with one fixed idea which they are unwilling to change. That is why feebleness is increasing day by day.

Just remember the qissah related by Hadhratwala: how hushyar the little boy turned out to be when confronted by a raging elephant. He was unperturbed and maintained his dignity.

To repeat: the therapy for thoughts is through thought. This is a special branch of knowledge called Nasiyati llm.

We have discussed the second question. We now come to the third question asked by Baba Farid Shakr Ganj (RA).

13.THE THIRD QUESTION

"The third question I asked, was: 'Who is one who is gani (rich)?'"

I am sure you are all thinking that the answer is simple: a garii is one who has one lakh rupees (100,000 rupees). Let us see...

"All 600 auliya-allah gave the same reply: A gani is one who has no tama'in him." The 600 auliya-allah are saying that a rich person is one who has no avarice in him. And we thought it was possessing thousands and millions! A person

may well possess millions, but if he has avarice (tama') in him, he is not rich (gani) - Tama'is the direct opposite of being gani.

14.THE FOURTH QUESTION

We now come to the fourth question.

"The fourth question I put to them was: 'Who is one who is garish (poor)?'"

"All 600 auliya-allah gave the same reply: 'A garib is one who has no qana'af." A poor person is one who has no contentment, Qana'at (contentment) is the direct opposite of greed (hirs). That person who has greed (hirs) is not wealthy (gani); and that person who has contentment (qana'at) is not poor (garib).

Let us ponder. Despite possessing material wealth, one is still filled with greed and avarice. What kind of richness is that? Richness (gena) is a quality connected with the heart, not with one's outside condition. One speaks about a "big-hearted

person", meaning a generous person, indicating richness to be connected with a person's heart.

Gena (richness) is one of the praiseworthy qualities, (the akhlaqe hamidah) which are connected with the heart. On the other hand tama' (avarice) is one of the akhlaqe razilah (the bad qualities) which are connected with the nafs. Similarly qana'at (contentment) is of the akhlaqe hamidah, connected with the heart. On the other hand hirs (greed) is of the akhlaqe razilah, connected with the nafs.

The person with hirs (greed) is obsessed with materialism, thinking of nothing else day and night, desiring his wealth to double and treble. He has no contentment.

The person with qana'at (contentment) is at the opposite pole. He avoids haraam wealth. He does not look with eyes of desire at others' wealth. He is contented - he makes sabr on meagre possessions.

This discussion on the four questions asked by Baba Farid Shakr Ganj (RA) form part of our discussion on mu'asharat. That person who is an aqil, who has ma'rifat, his mu'asharat is made. That person who is hushyar, who is not perturbed by any situation, his mu'asharat is made. That person who has no tama' but has gena - one who has no avarice but possesses richness - his mu'asharat is made. That person who has no hirs, but has qana'at -one who has no greed but has contentment - his mu'asharat is made. Such a person, within himself, has attained the status of sabr as commanded by Allah Ta'ala in the following ayet:

0 ye who believe! Endure

0 you Believers, if some personal difficulty befalls you, one which causes you fear and anxiety, some illness, a shortfall of money, etc, isbiru! You should remain steadfast. Do not be frightened. These are expected worldly problems. Living in this world how can you expect problems not to arise? What type of false hope is that? So, when a difficulty arises - isbiru! Do not be crushed.

These are difficulties of a personal nature. On the other hand you may encounter difficulties from others. Then too:

... and outdo all others in endurance,

Others may say or do things not to your liking. Then too do not be frightened by their opposition. Be courageous and steadfast. Do not lose your composure. Sabiru!

15.POLITICS

The ayet does not end there but goes on:

... and be ever ready. (S.3 A.200)

"Rabitu" applies at a national level. When threats are encountered from other countries, one's country should protect its frontiers by building a firm defence force. There should be no weaknesses in the defences so as to allow the opposing forces to enter. The "rabitu" is instructing us in siyasit (politics) - the protection of one's country's frontiers against invading forces. In a way "isbiru" and "sabiru" are also siyasit - siyasit of the batin: protect your internal milieu from any forces wanting to disrupt it.

What is siyasit (politics / diplomacy)? It is defined as "tadbire hasn": the temperament has to operate at such a level of statemanship that the best of methods are adopted to repulse any opposition that may present itself. This is siyasit. Siyasit (politics / diplomacy) is not the deceit and fraud implied by the word today.

That is why we say: That is no shariat which does not include siyasit; and that is no siyasit which does not fall within the shariat. Remember the above very well. You find people saying, "What connection is there between the shariat and siyasit? The two are independant." The politicians say that the shariat should not intrude into siyasit. This view was expressed to me personally by the principal of a major college in Bangalore during a conversation we were having. I had been listening silently to him, but when he expressed the view that siyasit is independant of the shariat, I spoke out. "That is not the case," I explained. "There is no such thing as a shariat if it does not include siyasit. And siyasit can only be such if it conforms to the shariat. Every aspect of siyasit falls under the shariat. Siyasit is an important branch of the shariat."

Siyasit is not sayisiyat - looking after horses!

Our theme is mu'asharat - to live a life of ease and comfort with one another in the social context. The relevant ayet of the Qur'an shareef was quoted to you. It starts off with the rights of parents:

(Show) kindness unto parents,

One should adopt the best of conduct towards one's parents. The right's of parents have been given top priority. Their rights are most important, coming first and taking precedence over others' with regard to respect, honour and obedience.

16.RELATIVES

This does not mean that the rights of others should be ignored. The ayet continues: ...and unto near kindred,

This refers to those relatives who are close - uncles and aunts, in-laws, etc. They should also be treated with respect and hospitality. With them too one should not behave in such a way as to cause any unpleasantness.

17.ORPHANS

... and orphans

These poor ones have nobody. So, do not ignore them. Our good conduct should extend towards them as well. The ayet simply states this. The Hadith shareef extols the virtues: should you rub an affectionate hand on their heads, the amount of neqi written in your account will be equal to the amount of hair on their heads! Who is capable of doing this? Only that Muslim in whose nature there has appeared some humility, some humbleness. Only such a person is capable of showing affection to these poor, lonely orphans by lovingly rubbing their heads and talking to them with kindness and magnanimity, cheering their forlorn hearts.

18.THE POVERTY STRICKEN ... and the needy,

The poverty stricken - those who have just sufficient for one meal. There is a difference between the misakin (poverty stricken) and the faqir (destitute). The faqir is that unfortunate who does not have enough even for a single meal.

19.NEIGHBOURS CLOSE - BY

...and the near neighbour,

Those neighbours who are near. With them too one should conduct oneself well.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Allah Ta'ala sent such orders with regard to neighbours that I feared that they may even have to be given a share in one's inheritance."

This gives an indication of the rights neighbours have over one. The qissah about Hadhratwala in this regard has been mentioned several times. I make no apology for repeating it. Repetition occurs in the Qur'an shareef as well. For example the qissah of Hadhrat Musa (A.S.) and Firoun have been repeated several times.

The object of repetition is to embed that particular lesson in one's heart, so that one can easily recall what is imbued in the heart when the occasion arises, and then act accordingly. It is for this reason that Hadhratwala used to say that one should read a kitab at least three times. The first reading is merely looking at the words. A little bit here and there will be understood. Only after the third reading will one understand the contents.

The qissah concerning Hadhratwala:

It was night time and Hadhratwala was asleep. He was a light sleeper....

His eating was also very light: one to one-and-a-half chapatis at night, some milk

before retiring. My Hadhratwala was amazing in every way. From time to time he used to relate to us incidents from his personal life, giving us an insight into his amazing lifestyle. Speaking about his sleep, he once said, "Sometimes I am unable to sleep and lie with eyes wide open. I look around and see the rest of the household sleeping peacefully. I feel tremendously pleased: even if I cannot sleep, the rest of the household was sleeping comfortably!"
What a clean heart! Whereas we? We are the direct opposite. We grudge others their comfort! But Hadhratwala's heart used to gladden at the comfort of others.

Another insight: Hadhratwala had a temperament that was amazingly organised and systematic. He told us, "I keep pencil and paper by my cushion. Whilst busy writing a kitab, at times my eyes open at night, and some idea or topic flashes through my mind, worthy of being included in the kitab. I immediately write it down. Who knows whether I will still remember it in the morning?"
System and organisation are typified here. Our condition is such however, that we would be more worried about our sleep: "If I were to look for a pen and paper and sit down to write, my sleep would get spoiled!"
Hadhratwala gave llm priority over sleep. The preciousness of Deeni knowledge was greater than that of sleep.

Back to our qissah:
Being a light sleeper, Hadhratwala's eyes suddenly opened. Something had disturbed his sleep: the sound of somebody groaning in pain reached his ears. That was enough to make his sleep disappear completely. Hadhratwala's nature was soft, very soft. Hadhratwala used to say, "It is a good thing I have no children. Why?

Because I have a soft nature. One does not know what children get up to, and, with my soft nature, it would have been very difficult for me. It is a very good thing I have no children!" Hadhratwala had been maligned by people saying that he was vehement and severe. Hadhratwala's reply to this accusation was as follows:

I have no shiddat (vehemence) in me at all. However, I confess I do have hiddat (sharpness). I admit that at times when some ill manners, something concerning tarbiyet, comes before me, sharpness does enter my attitude. Yes, I do show some hiddat then.

"But shiddat - that I should put somebody in trouble or cause him unnecessary difficulty? No, never! As to hiddat. I admit to that."

Note the superb self-analysis!

Hadhratwala continued, "And, dear brother, the hiddat also has its reasons. What can I say? Firstly I was born through the dua of a majzub. All the children my parents had, died shortly after birth. Once a majzub was in the area and somebody from the household mentioned this plight to him. He made dua: 'A child be born, then another. One is for me, the other for you. I was born shortly afterwards."

This is the first factor, that Hadhratwala was born through the dua of a majzub (one lost in divine contemplation), who has greater hiddat in him.

"The second factor is that I had as my wet nurse in infancy, the wife of a butcher.

"The third factor is that I was given strychnine."

Strychnine was used in medications. Its effect is to produce heat.

"And brother, the fourth factor is that our genealogy is Farouqi."

Hadhratwala's family on the father's side, are descendents of Hadhrat Omar Farouq (RA), who had hiddat in his nature.

"That is why my nature has hiddat in it. But not shiddat. People have baselessly maligned me. Those who live with me, and have had an opportunity to observe closely, will vouchsafe this fact that I am soft, so soft that you will not find anyone else as soft. Others are being frightened from coming here. Yes, others are being frightened off. But carry on. What harm is it to me?"

Back to our qissah:
The sound of somebody groaning in pain reached his ears. Hadhratwala was now wide awake. He went downstairs. In both houses, that of Baripirani saheba and Chotipirani saheba, servants were kept for duties outside the house. He woke up Sulaiman saheb, the servant.

"I hear somebody groaning. Can you find out who it is and what the problem is?"

Nowadays who bothers? All of you sitting here think. Does anybody bather? In this day and age even if the wife is groaning the husband will not trouble himself to find out why. Why lose one's sleep? What chance of bothering about the groaning outside?

The servant went to inquire and returned shortly to report, "Baribi, the neighbour, says that her daughter-in-law is in labour. She is having severe pains without making much progress."
"Ofo!" Hadhratwala said, "I still need to make ghusl....Never mind." Hadhratwala went immediately to make ghusl. He then wrote out a ta'wiz. There is a specific ta'wiz to be used during childbirth to ease the pain of labour.

Seeing that a Qur'anic ayet is written in making a ta'wiz, the person must be in a state of taharat (purity), and he should also have wudhu. We used to see Hadhratwala write a ta'wiz on a piece of paper, and have a second blank piece of paper underneath with which to cover the ta'wiz paper. Hadhratwala used to explain, "This is just a precaution. One is writing a Qur'anic ayet and one does not know whether the person to whom it is handed has wudhu or not. If he has no wudhu, how can he touch it? That is why the second (blank) paper is wrapped around it."

It is quite permissible to take the ta'wiz in one's hand if it is wrapped up thus, even if one has no wudhu. These teaching points Hadhratwala used to mention for our benefit.

In any case, the servant took the ta'wiz to the neighbour. A short while later, with the Grace of Allah Ta'ala, and the barkat of Hadhratwala, the infant was born.

This qissah is one to ponder over in the context of our discussion. Remember we are discussing...

...the neighbour who is close by, whose voice will reach one's ears. The neighbour far away will not be readily heard.

So, you have seen Hadhratwala's behaviour in this regard. What have you seen? You have seen how he spoiled his sleep to fulfill the rights of the neighbour close by. Not only that, but he took on the extra effort of making ghusl at that time of the night in order to fulfill this right completely. At times a sheikh will disclose personal details of his behaviour to his mureeds, for the lessons contained therein

as far as tarbiyet is concerned. He does this in the same vein as quoting incidents concerning others - for the lesson or example contained in them.

These personal details are related for the benefit of those close to him. Of course, there are others sitting and listening as well, but these listen indifferently. Not so those who are close to the sheikh - they are greatly affected because of their great love and affection for their sheikh, affection not showered on others.

The neighbours close by. Allah Ta'ala is plainly giving a command on good relationships and excellent behaviour with those neighbours who are close by. This command is obviously concerning mu'asharati lifestyle, and not mas'alas concerning trade, lending and borrowing!

20.NEIGHBOURS AT A DISTANCE

The ayet continues:

... and the distant neighbour

The neighbour a distance away. Good relationships and excellent behaviour should extend to them as well, and not only to the neighbour close by.

Note the sequence: first come parents, then relatives, then the poor and the orphans, then the neighbours close by, and now the neighbours at a distance. Do not think you can ignore them, for they also have rights over you. If, for some reason or other, the immediate neighbour is unconcerned, you, as a distant neighbour, should have some concern.

Here is another application of the ayet: Several students share a dormitory in the "Boarding." Amongst the students are some who are poor, others may be better off.

The one student is a neighbour of the next. But you find that a poor student takes ill and the others in the room do not bother. His groaning is ignored. Nobody wipes his brow or presses his aching back. Nobody makes an effort to get medicines for him.
Do you understand? Do you see how the practical side of the ayet fits in? These are points to bear in mind. This is the mu'asharati lifestyle.

Our akabir (pious predecessors) exemplified this lifestyle. It is not necessary to labour the point, but, nevertheless, let me relate an incident. I had become ill. I was living across the courtyard, upstairs still. (This was long before the other episode mentioned earlier on.) I got the news that Hadhratwala had come from Thana Bhawan specifically to visit me. There was a chair and an extra charpai in the room, but the door frame was low. What if Hadhratwala was to knock his head as he entered? While these thoughts were racing through my mind Hadhratwala walked into the room. Salaams were exchanged and Hadhratwala enquired about my health. He then went to sit on the charpai. I slipped off the bed and went to sit on the chair, facing him. Hadhratwala suggested, "Why do you not lie down?" I was feeling strong enough to sit, so I did not take up the suggestion. Hadhratwala merely said, "Very well."
Hadhratwala remained silent. He was sitting with his head bent down. I was sitting directly in front of him. After a few moments I started getting palpitations. A fine sweat broke out all over my body. I said, "Hadhrat, I am feeling a bit weak. I will lie down." Hadhratwala said, "I had already suggested to you that you should lie down to rest on the charpai. Very well." I went to lie down.

Hafiz Manfa'at saheb was also in the room. In those early days there were only two of us teaching here, Hafiz Manfa'at saheb and myself. Hadhratwala had actually sent me here, and we were under his patronage.

Hafiz Manfa'at saheb saw me perspiring and came forward to remove my mozas, (light-leather socks), which I used to wear when the weather was cold. He started taking off the right moza first. I stopped him. "No take off the left first."

The correct procedure as far as clothes, mozas, shoes, etc. is concerned is to take off from the left first and then the right. When putting on, start from the right.

After a short while Hadhratwala left. Then I understood what had happened: Hadhratwala had made tawajju on me for the relief of illness. Hadhratwala's concentration with his head bent down, and my feeling light-headed while sitting in front of him, was his tawajju on me. After that I felt much better. The fever and weakness disappeared.

Hafiz Manfa'at saheb's routine was to go to Thana Bhawan in the evenings, stay the night there, and return in the morning. The following morning, on returning from Thana Bhawan, he told me, "As I was leaving the khanqa Hadhratwala saw me and asked me how you were. I said that you were now well. Hadhratwala was pleased." From this incident you can gauge the quality of the mu'asharati lifestyle of the seniors towards the juniors, how much affection they had for the juniors.

Hadhratwala also took care to attend regularly the annual jalsa that took place here in Ramadhan. He used to arrive here in a palki (litter) in order to participate in the jalsa.

We are discussing the rights of the neighbour at a distance. Those of you who are ihle-ilm, would have studied the translations and tafsir of this ayet. You should judge to what extent our ihle-ilm have applied this ayet.

Yes, those who are applying this ayet practically are the sufiya-ikram, the ulema-e-rabbani, the ulema-e-haqqani. These are ihle-ilm who understand the Qur'an and Hadith shareefas related to the batin.

Is the Qur'an shareef merely to recite, or to act on as well? The Qur'an shareef is to be studied, to be understood and to be propagated. Even after having studied it, if we do not act on its injunctions who do we expect to act on them? The non-Muslim, Tom, Dick and Harry?

Think about it. Do not look at me - what must I do if these are the topics that come to mind?

This topic came to mind because of your headlong rush into the majlis-khana, falling over each other, one on top of the other. This made me speak on the mu'asharati lifestyle. There are still more aspects to discuss.

The Qur'an shareef is there for us to practice on its injunctions. Among these injunctions of Allah Ta'ala are those related to mu'asharat. Various incidents from the lives of our akabir have been related to illustrate the application of these injunctions, so that we may pattern our lives accordingly. A molvi, one who has studied the Qur'an and Hadith shareef, should be aware of his status and live accordingly. That is, he should continuously be aware of the mu'asharat set forth in the Qur'an shareef and Hadith shareef, and he should be continuously watchful of his behaviour. This stock-taking is called ihtisab.

So important is this ihtisab that a country with Islamic rule will have an appointed person as a mohtasib (a person taking hisab), who will go around taking stock of the state of the people.

Omar Farouq (RA), during his Khilafat, used to perform this task himself, patrolling the city of Madina himself. The situation in the country will determine the number of people appointed for this task. One person may not be enough, so others may be required to ensure patrolling takes place day and night.

The mohtasib will keep the ruler informed of the state of the people, both their worldly status and their Deeni status. He will also give guidance to the people accordingly, with hikmat (wisdom), not with hukumat (authoritarianism).

This is at a national level. At the individual level every Muslim is a mohtasib unto himself - he is ever watchful over his nafs. He takes stock of every breath of his. After he speaks he takes stock: "This is what I said. I was speaking to that person. Have I not hurt him in any way by what I said?" This exercise should be carried out regularly every time he speaks, until it becomes a habit to review his spoken words.

There is no such thing as speaking freely. As far as action is concerned, a Muslim definitely has no freedom of action - he is not free to act uninhibitedly, so how can he speak uninhibitedly? Speaking anything, to anybody, at any time - is this the quality of an admi? Is this being civilised?

A Muslim is accountable for his speech as well as his actions. At all times his speech should be respectful and cultured. Honour and dignity should not be discarded.

Do you understand?

Huquqe mu'asharati - the rights of social inter-relationships - include jan (life), mal (wealth), kam (work), ka!am (speech). Our akabir exemplified this lifestyle.

A bhangi (nightsoil cleaner) from Thana Bhawan came to Deoband to meet Maulana Qasim (RA). (This incident was related to us by Hadhratwala).

Maulana Qasim (RA) treated him so hospitably as to make one think that the person was not a bhangi but some relative visiting him. He even ordered a hukkah to be brought for him. After the bhangi had left somebody remarked to Maulana Qasim (RA), "Hadhrat, you showered so much hospitality on him as if he were some visiting relative. He was a mere bhangi."

Maulana Qasim (RA) responded, "You saw him as a mere bhangi. I saw him as a Thanvi - a resident of the town where my sheikh Hajee Saheb resides."

These are matters concerning the heart, concerning one's ta'alluq. They need no explanation. How can one explain the elegance and exquisiteness of the temperaments of our akabir? Take another instance:

Some people from Rampur went for Haj. While in Makkah they also visited Hajee Saheb. (Hajee Saheb had by this time made hijrat from Thana Bhawan and was residing in Makkah). As a gift for Hajee Saheb, these people from Rampur had made a musallah of deer skin, which they presented to Hajee Saheb. Hajee Saheb graciously accepted the gift and took the proffered musallah. He then commented, But I perceive the scent of Thana Bhawan emanating from this musallah."

One of the visitors said, "We had gone out hunting, but we found no game close by. We eventually landed in the forests of Thana Bhawan, where we spotted this

deer and hunted it down. It was our desire to present Hadhrat with a gift, so we made a musallah of its skin. Quite correctly, this musallah is from the skin of a deer from Thana Bhawan."

Such was the exquisiteness of the senses of our akabir. Through mujahada and riyadhat (spiritual exercises) such secrets of tariqat were experienced by them. At times they revealed a little, not to everyone, but to those close to them, those involved in tarbiyat. Otherwise they remained silent. Such incidents would not be understood by all.

Nowadays peoples' attitudes are such that they are cynical and will deny such occurrences. But remember, by denying them one is placing oneself in a potentially dangerous situation. Such a cynic does not get on well with others. He feels uncomfortable in this type of gathering. Yet, you find such a person coming to sit here. His intention is not to rectify himself, so his attitude to the talks is completely negative. Instead of improving, such a person deteriorates, and the respectability in him disappears. Despite being learned he speaks rudely even to his father - disrespectfully addresses him as "tu"!

One is not being derogatory to anybody. These points are mentioned for the sake of the sincere ones, so that they may safeguard themselves by not associating with such people. Not to be misunderstood: those who come for some necessary work are not being prevented from doing so. But to cultivate their friendship even after you know that they are different, that they are such as are vindictive to their own parents?

These are incidental matters. Let us continue:

21.THOSE SITTING CLOSE BY

After mentioning the neighbours close by and at a distance, the ayet carries on:

... and the companion by your side,(Those who are sitting close to you.)

This is what I wished to bring to your attention, even though it comes late in the ayet.

Those sitting close to you in the majlis, see that you conduct yourself properly with them. Neither cause them inconvenience, nor grief. Be considerate when you sit. Do not crowd them. Your sitting with them may be for a short while, as here, or it may be for a lengthy period, as at a jalsa. In coming to sit, or going to make musafah (shake hands), observe the same good manners. Be considerate. Do not push. Do not fall one over another. Do not run, or jump over others. In your haste you may hit somebody with your elbow, knock another with your knee, strike somebody with your feet. This is the application of the Qur'anic ayet in our immediate situation. Do not cause the person next to you any inconvenience or difficulty, neither physically nor in any other way. When speaking do not address him in a hurtful manner.

Parents and relatives have been mentioned. Neighbours have been mentioned. Allah Ta'ala now mentions the people you are sitting with. In a way, they are also your neighbours, but their importance has necessitated that they be mentioned in a special category, the sahibi bil jambe.

Neither by one's speech nor one's actions should we harm or inconvenience the next person. There are other ways of harming the next person.

For example: The person next to you has something in his pocket. Aha! It is a pen. The pen is quietly removed and taken. This is causing him material loss.
Another example: One comes in and sprawls down. The person next to you has now to sit all cramped up. This is causing him physical inconvenience. Etc.

We see thus, that the Qur'an shareef also instructs us as to how to conduct ourselves with the person sitting next to us. All this falls in the category of mu'asharat, which (as Hadhratwala had noted) even the learned and deendar have taken out from the Deen and discarded. In actual fact, mu'asharat is an important aspect of one's life. The friction and unhappiness one sees amongst people are mainly due to degeneration of mu'asharat. Only occasionally is it due to corruption in dealings and transactions (mu'amulat). This is because mu'asharat affects us twenty-four hours a day, whereas mu'amulat have their set times. Mu'asharat affects us in the home and outside; mu'amulat only occur in the business setting.

22.THE WAYFARER

So, let us continue with the ayet:

... and the wayfarer

The musafir, the person on a journey.

Be considerate to others when you are travelling. When we were children we used to hear the older people saying, "Safr ka sakhr". "Sakhr" means Jahannam. Later, when studying Hadith shareef we read in Bukhari shareef:

Journeying is a piece of the Fire of Jahannam.

No matter how comfortable one tries to make one's journey, one cannot equal the comfort and freedom one enjoys at home. At home one can eat at any time, sleep at any time. One can do what one likes, when one likes. This freedom is absent during a journey. Travelling is a big mujahada.

Once, when travelling in England, we arrived at our destination in a certain city. Now, my schedule and habits during travels are the same as those at home. Sleeping has its proper time. No such thing as feeling a bit tired, so have a nap. This has not happened during travels, and it has not happened on arrival back home. Meals have their times. No question of feeling peckish, so have a meal. When we arrived we were welcomed and then seated, and conversation commenced. Somebody suggested, "Hadhrat, would you care to lie down for a while?"

I replied, "No, it is not my nature to do so." He seemed surprised.

"Hadhrat has travelled such a long distance, and for quite a long time."

I said, "Yes, but during travel my mazhab is different." When those present heard me speak about another mazhab, they were all surprised.

"But we are all of the same mazhab."

"No. During travels my mazhab is different," I repeated. Everybody was now curious. What is this new mazhab Hadhrat is coming with?

I explained, "My mazhab is this that, when about to travel, the moment I set my foot outside my house door, I shut the door on all thoughts of comfort and of getting angry. This is my mazhab when travelling!"

This is so because one comes across many such things that go against one's temperament during one's travels. As a guest at somebody's place you have in mind

a certain schedule but your host does just the opposite! Your diet is of a certain nature and you are served the opposite. Etc., etc. If one's temperament is such that it is easily irritated, the next thing that happens is anger wells up, and then this anger is evident in the words one utters.

So, one should lock up one's anger at home and leave aside all thoughts of comfort.

After I had explained my "mazhab" my host did not insist on my going to lie down, and we carried on speaking.

Here (in Jalalabad) we have lunch approximately at noon, long before Zuhr. Noon, came and I expected everybody to be getting ready for lunch. Nothing happened. It went on to 1p.m. still nothing. Lunch was served only after Zuhr, which is the custom over there.

So, one has to adjust one's routine, but one does not say anything.

In the cold climate over there, tea is served at odd times. My habit here was to have tea after Zuhr, just before Asr. This was my routine during travels too. Over there, every now and then somebody would offer tea, which I would politely refuse. They commented, "We find you amazing! Others who come to visit us tend to drink tea every now and then. Also, quite a bit is spent on buying pan. Whereas you do not chew pan at all, and tea you refuse."

"Safr hadhratan" - Habits in travel should be like those at home. The question of usuls (principles) is different. My Hadhrat used to say, "The usuls of safr are different, and the usuls of hadr (residence) are different. One cannot adopt the same principles in travel that one adopts at home." In safr there is caution and consideration, and one has to overlook many things.

"Ibnis sabil" - the musafir, the wayfarer. The other categories that have been dealt with are people we know. We now come to the wayfarer who is a complete stranger. He should also be shown due consideration. The status of a person at home may be such that he enjoys all round respect and honour. However, when he is travelling he is just as ordinary as anyone else. For example: the provincial administrator, in his office or at home, will be shown great respect, which his status demands. However, if he is travelling in his personal capacity, he will be treated like any other ordinary person by those who do not know him. If he tries to exert his authority in this situation, it will get him nowhere.

One can only exclaim one's wonder at the depth with which Allah Ta'ala has laid out our mu'asharat, "Wah! Allah mia. Wah!" Is there anything left out by Allah Ta'ala in the Qur'an shareef? Definitely not! Every aspect of our life has been touched on, what makes up our social environment, our "mahol". The English word "society" has become popular. We often hear people justifying their behaviour by saying, "What can we do? Society is like that." The person blaming "society" is actually exposing his own weakness. He is confessing to his own cowardice. From the fear of "society" he is refraining from that which is polite, decent and good, and, as a Muslim, that which the shariat has commanded. His excuse is that the "mahol", the social environment, is to be blamed.

This person is testifying to his cowardice. By succumbing to the environment he has had the bravado knocked out of him. Just look at the dressing of a Muslim, even that of the unsophisticated peasant: thigh-hugging pants, a "kurtiya" till the hips (the kurta has disappeared), and a head not covered by a topi. The Muslim has

himself removed his royal crown, the topi, from his head. Whereas the suit a Muslim should be wearing should consist of a topi, kurta and ijar, and shoes. The Islamic mu'asharati lifestyle has been discarded and destroyed.

Ibnis sabil - the wayfarer. He is a stranger, not known to you. Yet, treat him with due consideration, whether he is a Muslim or non-Muslim. Observe his rights. Do not sit in the bus or train in such a way as to inconvenience him. If a woman climbs on, and there is no vacant seat for her, your response should be, "Bhen, please sit here. I have been sitting long enough." This is the Islamic code of manners.
We had a safir here, a roving ambassador, a very good man who has now passed away. He related an experience of his to us. "Once I was travelling by train. The coach was full. At different stops some men climbed on, others climbed off. At one stop a non-Muslim woman climbed on. There was no vacant seat for her. I stood up and called to her to sit on the seat I had vacated, which she did. A non-Muslim man seated nearby, commented, "Molvijee, you have won. I was watching you and noted your friendly attitude to your fellow religionists. When this lady entered, one of my co-religionists, I wondered what your attitude would be. But you have won - you stood up and offered her your seat. Today I have seen what Islamic manners really are!"

These are manners which we have discarded!
During the period that Islam spread far and wide, did Islam spread by the sword? No, never! This is a malicious lie levelled at Muslims. Islam spread through the good character and behaviour of the Muslims.
You will remember that the use of the sword was specifically forbidden in the

early period of Islam, during the first 13 years in Makkah. Yet, Islam spread. So, what was it? Good character! Even afterwards, when the use of the sword was allowed, it was not used at random. And later still, when Muslims had gained victory over other countries, it was not the sword that was held over the heads of the defeated. After gaining victory the country was at times handed to its inhabitants to rule, but under certain conditions: they were told to pay jizya, to avoid oppression, not to cause hardship to Muslims, not to trouble the Muslim traveller, not to prevent anyone from entering the fold of Islam, etc. But you rule. Our objective is not to take over the rule.

Look at the attitude to the zimmi (those non-Muslims who were brought back as captives): They were to be dealt with on an equal footing with Muslims. For example: if a zimmi was wrongfully killed by a Muslim, that Muslim was answerable for his murder.

23.ANIMALS

Let us proceed further. So far we have dealt with the rights of different categories of humans. What about the rights of animals? Islam teaches that the domestic animal in your possession is your responsibility. You have to see to its food and drink, to its shelter, to its protection from the heat of summer and the cold of winter, all to be done in the correct manner.

Should you wish to slaughter an animal, it is incumbent on you to use a very sharp knife. Should you use a blunt knife, you will have committed a sin, for which you will be called to account. So that, on the day of Qiyamat, that animal will ask to be compensated for the unnecessary suffering inflicted on it. The rights of the animal

will then be requited. The owner of the animal will not be in a position to deny his guilt. Allah Ta'ala will then order him, "Lie down!" The animal will then be told, "Go ahead and take your revenge."
When an animal dies, that is the end of it.. There is no Jannat and no Jahannam for an animal, it will be turned into dust. Nevertheless, the rights of every animal will be requited.

These are the rights that the creation enjoys, which are rights demanded by Allah Ta'ala. By observing the rights of the creation, one is in fact observing the rights of Allah Ta'ala (Huququllah).

Take this illustration: A person does not hurl abuse at the child's father, but the child is abused. Will the father of that child not take offence? Of course he will. If you understand the above, then you will understand the following as well:
The kafir is accountable to Allah Ta'ala for his kufr, but as for you, you are accountable for your behaviour towards him as far as his mu'asharati rights are concerned.
Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (RA)'s mother-in-law came from Makkah to visit her daughter in Madina. Hadhrat Abubakr (RA)'s wife was worried. She went to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and enquired: "My mother has come. She has not brought iman as yet. She is a kafirah. What should I do?"
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) replied, "She is your mother. Treat her well. Be hospitable and charitable towards her.
The same would apply if the father was a kafir and the children were Muslim. If

this is the right of a kafir parent, how much more respectfully must a Mu'min parent not be treated? Because of his iman his status is obviously higher.

Do you understand?

Today the concept of a mu'asharati lifestyle has been placed before you, with the necessary proofs. This is necessary for the furtherance of your is/ah, for the improvement of your habits, actions and deeds, and your total lifestyle.

Different approaches have been adopted, so that you may become aware of your shortcomings. You have been shown how to behave towards those staying with you, your parents, your brothers and sisters, and children, your relatives, in-laws, uncles, aunts, nephews and nieces, your neighbours, etc. The appropriate proofs have been laid before you so that you may act on what you have heard.

Youngsters present here will have had their ears opened and made aware of their disrespect for their parents, and the grief they cause them by going around with any type of company, going out when they feel like it, and coming home at their own time.

Our age was different. One could not leave the house without the permission of one's parents. The mere thought of coming home late would send shivers of fear down our spines.

Nowadays youngsters come and go as they like. There is no concern about the hour - early or late, it makes no difference. They go where they want to and sit around with whom they want to. This could not be done in the past. The habits of the past

are the very teachings of Islam which have been handed down to us from 1400 years ago.

The ayet on mu'asharat came to mind today because of the way people came running in this morning. In the rush there is bound to be bumping and falling, knocking of knees and elbows, and striking of feet. In sitting down there is bound to be thumping and pushing. Is that not so?

So, this ayet came to mind, instructing on mu'asharat. It is an all-encompassing ayet, extending to the consideration to be given to the musafir even. If the traveller is to be given consideration, what about the person sitting next to you? And the neighbours at a distance, the neighbours close by, the orphans and the poor, one's relatives, and parents? If each category has priority over the previous one, one can imagine the rights parents enjoy.

24.IBADAT AND ABDIYET

Today's lesson, today's majlis has been on mu'asharat. It should be obvious to you now that mu'asharat is also ibadat.

One type of ibadat is obviously ibadat - namaz, etc. There is another ibadat which is indirectly so. In appearance it does not seem to be ibadat.

If this second category does not have the appearance of ibadat, how can we say it is ibadat? The answer is: When Allah Ta'ala's orders are carried out as they should be, one receives thawab. Whatever carries with it thawab falls in the category of ibadat.

It is on this basis that Islamic mu'asharat is ibadat. So, do not think that five times namaz at its proper times, with jama'at and takbire-via, performed with all the proper arkans, or tilawat of the Qur'an shareef with proper tajwid, or sitting with tasbih and making zikr, are the only forms of ibadat.

It is important to attain perfection in all categories of the Deen, and not only in those categories which are obviously ibadat.

That, person leaving out this important section of the Deen cannot be called an abed. He is not deserving of the title of "abed" (pious worshipper).

He has not developed abdiyet in himself yet. We find that when he sees a poor person he turns his face away. Where will he condescend to concern himself about the conditions of the poor? We also find that when travelling, he is only concerned about his own Comfort, irrespective of the inconvenience caused others. Etc.

From this ayet of the Qur'an shareef we have come to realise, through cur shortcomings, what a major ibadat we have left out. Yet we are happy within ourselves that we are performing tahajjud and making tilawat, that our beards conform to the requirements of the shariat, that our trousers' legs are now above the ankle, and that the length of our kurta now extends lower then before. Yes, we feel very happy in our hearts about these.

Yet, we have discarded many sections of the Deen, one of which is mu'asharat. For this we will be accountable to Allah Ta'ala.

Yes, Allah Ta'ala will ask, "Why did you speak in such a way as to hurt the next person's feelings, as to offend him?"

Here please note: If the next person is offended by some aspect of the shariat, then this is not called hurting his feelings. Also, if there is offence to the Deen by following somebody's opinion, then one cannot accept his opinion, no matter how offended he feels. His opinion has to be ignored.

In other words, to offend a person is nothing compared to offending the Deen.

Nowadays a completely wrong meaning is attached to the expression "offending somebody". We find, at times, Westernised persons telling the molvis, "What is the matter? You are not prepared to accept anything we say. We feel very offended, and it is not a nice thing to offend others."

When confronted in this way, there is no question of being overwhelmed. "We are there to serve. Our lives are there to please, to cheer, to bring ease and comfort, to be magnanimous. But we have no choice. What can we do? To accept your views would be to offend our Deen. At this point the Deen says something else. And you also admit that this is Deen. Most probably you were not aware what the Deen had to say on the issue, that is why you voiced a different opinion. We are certain that, when you realise your error, you will retract your viewpoint."

When the position has been explained thus, the following response would be forthcoming: "Maulana, please forgive me, maf. I was not aware of the deeper aspects involved. Insha'allah ta'ala I will bear it in mind in future."

This is an illustration of the etiquette of speaking. Talk to a person at his level.

Islam has certain maxims. This is one of them: "Talk to a person at his level of intelligence. "

"Respond to a person according to his status. "

This is another maxim. It is not within the capabilities of everybody to apply these maxims in the varying situations, bearing in mind the subtleties involved.

This reminds me of an incident:
Hadhratwala used to hold his majlise-am after Zuhr. (The majlise-khas and akhas were held only if there were special visitors). Anybody could come to sit in a majlise-am. Those who so wished, could go forward to make musafah (shake hands), but few could muster up enough courage to actually go forward to do so.
It was during one such majlise-am that a Hindu orderly entered the majlis khana and approached Hadhratwala.
"Huzur", he said, after being asked his errand, "the Tehsildar saheb has come in his horse-drawn coach. He wishes to meet you."
It was still the period of the British Raj. Horses were still commonly used for travel. Partition took place some years after the demise of Hadhratwala.
The orderly continued, "I am his orderly, and he has sent me to seek permission for him to meet you. His coach is at the entrance."

Here people come in and go out any old how! There was nothing stopping the tehsildar from having come in to converse with Hadhratwala. But that would have been out of place. Unannounced and without introduction, it could have led to embarrassing situations. Being a high ranking official the correct protocol was to send the orderly to seek permission first.

Hadhratwala gave his permission and the orderly departed to inform the tehsildar. We were sitting and watching. Hadhratwala told us, "When the tehsildar enters, I

will stand up, but do not any of you stand up." The tehsildar was a non-Muslim. The tehsildar entered. Next to Hadhratwala was a space for visitors. Placed there was a quilt and a cushion. A small table stood nearby as well, having some kitabs and a few other items on it. We remained seated. Hadhratwala placed his hands on the ground for support, and started getting up. The tehsildar quickly went forward and stopped Hadhratwala. "Huzur, do not trouble yourself."

Hadhratwala sat down again. The tehsildar was seated on one side and made comfortable.

Hadhratwala then explained, "All the people sitting here are quite aware of the etiquette of receiving a guest. However, I was the one who had instructed them to remain sitting.'

Hadhratwala was answering an unasked question. The thought must have come into the tehsildar's mind when he entered and saw Hadhratwala starting to rise, "Why is it that everybody else is sitting while Hadhrat is standing up?"

Hadhratwala had an uncanny ability to anticipate doubts arising in others' minds.

Hadhratwala explained further, "Persons like yourself, in positions of responsibility, have a composed mind. If so many people were to stand up suddenly, all at once, it must cause some disturbance, which would be inconsiderate on our side. It was to preserve your inner tranquility that I had ordered them not to rise."

Do you understand?

Huquq, Rights of the guest, who was a non-Muslim, but a ruler in his own right.

Respond to a person according to his status

We were taught everything. Pray we have the tawfiq to act accordingly.

To act fully and completely on the ayet of the Qur'an and Hadith shareef, on every occasion, taking cognisance of place and person, should be our aim.

A point to remember with regard to the incident just related: Hadhratwala rising for the tehsildar was not ta'ziman, nor mohabbatan - it was neither out of reverance nor out of love - this would be na-ja'ez.

It was "ikraman-bizzayf" - respect for a guest. It was a portrayal of Islamic manners. It would also fall in the category of "dafa' mudharrat' - preventing harm. The intention is not "jalbe manfa'at" (to derive benefit), which would be na-ja'ez. This I mention in case somebody were to ask, "How could Hadhratwala stand up for a non-Muslim?"

Today the muasharati lifestyle has been placed before you.

May Allah Ta'ala give us, and all of you, the tawfiq arzani to act according to this mu'asharat, in our homes and outside, with our own and with strangers.

Chapter No.:

5

1.FOREWORD

Through the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala, and the barkat of our sheikh, Maseehul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Muhammed Maseehullah Khan saheb (damat barakatuhum), and the dua's of our readers, this fifth booklet is now ready. May Allah Ta'ala cause us all to benefit continuously from the teachings of our sheikh.

One of the remarkable features of Hadhratjee's majalis is that it caters for all those present. The needs of the mubtadi (the beginner) are seen to, as well as the needs of the muntahi (the accomplished). Therefore, from time to time, each majlis has to be read through thoroughly again. The reason is that, as the beginner progresses from stage to stage, points not fully comprehended initially now become clearer. When he first read a majlis, it was as a beginner, and he would have attached importance to only those aspects that affected him directly. But now, as he progresses, other aspects will appear clearer to him, and will now become relevant to him at this particular stage. This process continues until he reaches the level of the muntahi.

At this stage too it will be necessary to look at some of the majalis again, as newer problems and challenges come to the fore. Even if a person has reached a stage where he remembers all the majalis, then too it is necessary to keep on looking at the recommended kitabs from time to time.

What is the basis for this statement?

The following: one particular morning we entered the majliskhana as usual, and sat down. Hadhratjee started by taking the copy of "Hayatul Muslimeen" that was lying on his small desk, and opened it at the page where he had placed a marker.

For our benefit, Hadhratjee commented that he had been looking at the kitab earlier on and had come across this interesting and important passage. But before reading the passage, Hadhratjee commented that this kitab, "Hayatul Muslimeen" was such a kitab that one should keep on glancing at it from time to time. The majlis that followed was based on the passage read out by Hadhratjee.

Similarly, the chapters on the akhlaqe razilah and akhlaqe hamidah in "Shariat and Tasuwwuf' have to be read over and over again. ("Good Character" serves as an introduction to "Shariat and Tasuwwuf", and it is also a handy reference book afterwards.) Also of importance in one's reading schedule is a kitab on fiqh (mas'alah masa'il). Hadhratjee recommends that one reads three to five masa'il daily.

It must be pointed out again that these booklets are not a substitute for direct contact with one's sheikh. If, for some reason, one cannot contact one's sheikh, one should at least try to be in contact with one of his khulafa.

This is the basic formula for progress: a schedule of learning, and contact with one's sheikh. By following this formula consistently, there is no reason why the reader will not progress from stage to stage, and from strength to strength, insha'allah ta'ala. Dr. Ismaiel Mangera

TIJARAT - TRADE AND COMMERCE

(This is a translation of a majlis-e-khas held by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammed Maseehullah Khan Saheb, in Jalalabad, India, on the 7th October 1989, corresponding with the 5th Rabi-ul Awal 1410)

Despite listening to so many talks, some remain where they ah:. They make no progress. I do not know what their niyets are, but Allah Ta'ala is well aware of niyets (intentions and resolves). Allah Ta'ala then causes improvement in one's character, what is termed islah, according to this nugget. This process is called hidayet (guidance). Islah and hidayet thus depends on one's niyet.

What is the relevant ayet in the qur'an shareef ....?

Lo! Allah changeth not the condition of a folk until
they first) change that condition themselves. (S.13 A.21)

This is quite plain and straightforward: Allah Ta'ala changes the condition of a nation due to its own actions. Its pitiful condition is because it has brought on oppression (zulm) on itself. In another ayet Allah Ta'ala states:

Lo! Allah wrongeth not
mankind in aught; but
mankind wrong themselves. (S.10 A.44)

2.GUIDANCE (HIDAYET) AND DEVIATION (DHALALAT)

This applies to an individual as well. When a person invites deviation (dhalalat), as shown by his conduct, then Allah Ta'ala causes him to go astray.
After all, Allah Ta'ala is the Divine Original Cause of each and everything, even guidance (hidayet) and deviation (dhalalat).

Allah Ta'ala states:
Allah verily sendeth whom He will astray; and guideth whom He wills. (S.35 A.8)

This does NOT mean that Allah Ta'ala gives guidance at random and that the individual has no choice in the matter. This is not the case.

What it means is that, when a person adopts those means which lead to hidayet (guidance) then AIlah Ta'ala, as the Prime Cause, leads him to hidayet. And when a person adopts those means that lead to deviation (dhalalat), then Allah Ta'ala allows him to go astray.

People tend to derive wrong meanings when looking at translations of the qur'an shareef, therefore it is not permissible for people to look at translations of the qur'an shareef without an ustadh.

3.LOOKING AT QURANIC TRANSLATIONS, AND AN OVERSEAS LETTER

I received a letter from overseas, either from Africa or from England. The letter was from a pious lady, punctual with her saum and salat, reciting the qur'an shareef a lot, etc. - all in all a very deendar person. The poor lady was lamenting about her husband, that he was not performing his namaz, that he was drinking, that he cast lustful glances at others. She then wrote, "I was brought up in a well-bred Deeni-conscious family, and alhamdulillah, there is ,deendari in me. Then, how is it that I came to be landed with such a husband? Especially seeing that the qur'an shareef states:

"This means that the khabees (wicked/evil/foul) are for the khabees, and the tayytb (good/pure/chaste) are for the tayylb. I am no khabees, so how did I get such a husband?"

In reply, I wrote to the lady, "This is the very reason why it is not permissible to read the translation of the quran shareef without an ustadh! The correct interpretation of the ayet is as follows: If a man has a khabees-type temperament, and he has a wife who is tayyib, deendar and pretty, nevertheless his khabees temperament will draw him to a showy wiman and a wiman of the street. In a similar way, if a khabees wife has a husband who is good and pious, her khabees temperament will draw her to that man who is also khabees, one who is immoral and a profligate.

"But, masha'allahu ta'ala, in your situation you are deendar. How can you even think of yourself as khabees? That may be his temperament, but you yourself are pious, masha'allahu ta'ala."

One can see the error she fell into in interpreting the ayet herself. That is why it is not permissible to read the translation of the quran shareef without an ustadh.

We were speaking of niyets. lslah and hidayet are dependent on one's niyet. Allah Ta'ala is well aware of one's niyet. He then deals with individuals accordingly. It is therefore important to safeguard one's niyet.

For instance: What is one's niyet (intention and resolve) when associating with a burzug

4.THE CONFIDENCE TRICKSTER

Different people have different attitudes, some of which are corrupt: for example, seeking Jab (fame), or seeking mal (wealth). These individuals attempt to get something out of others by gaining their confidence, so that people must come to

believe, "He is connected to such-and-such a burzug of such-and-such a place. Therefore, ma'shaallah, he must be a pious person himself." He wishes to deceive the people and deceive the sheikh.
The moment he sees that people consider him to be pious and upright, because he has made a point of being seen in the company of the pious, he puts his worldly ploy, the confidence trick, into action. He starts by taking a loan of twenty rupees, and he pays it back punctually. The cycle of borrowing and repaying punctually has started: sometimes he borrows a hundred rupees, and he pays it back; sometimes he borrows five-hundred rupees, and he pays this back. In this manner he establishes his trustworthiness. Ma'sha'allah, he is somebody who pays back punctually, and he is also somebody who associates with the pious. He has won the confidence of the people. He now borrows ten thousand rupees, and he does NOT pay it back! The confidence trick has been brought to its successful completion.

I do not speak of incidents that have not taken place. This particular incident has been related from past experience.

If this is his ntye4 to extort money from people by using a confidence trick, then it is obvious he can expect no benefit from Allah Ta'ala, that he will get no hidayet from Allah Ta'ala. It is not Allah Ta'ala who wants him to go astray. The ayet quoted just now does not mean that Allah Ta'ala wants him to go astray. It is not Allah Ta'ala's purpose to lead man astray: Allah Ta'ala has revealed the qur'an shareef; with specific laws and guidance, so that a person may come on to hidayet. Here is a thought: if Allah Ta'ala wanted to lead man astray, why create Jannat? Jahannam alone would have sufficed' No. It is this person who has deliberately

sought deviation (dhalalat) by his wrong thoughts and beliefs, and by his evil conduct. So, AIlah Ta'ala has caused him to deviate.

5.A PARABLE AND A POET'S COUPLET

Here is an illustration: A person wishing to travel is lost. He does not know the way to his destination. A friend, who knows the route, is prepared to direct him. However, this person does not feel confident enough to go just by directions alone, so the friend goes with him, pointing out the way and also pointing out the dangers. After travelling only a short distance the person interrupts, and says, "I know the path now. I do not need you any more." The friend holds his hand and says, "Wait! There is a well directly in front, and you are heading straight for it!"

The person says, "What well? There is no well. Leave my handt" Despite his friend's pleas, he forces his hand free, and he walks blindly forward, to fall into the well.

The question now is: Did the friend throw this person into the well?

The answer is: Obviously not! He himself had this strange desire to fall into the well. The friend was there to guide him, and tried to prevent him by actually holding him back. But the help was scorned. Such thick-headed people should really be given a shove from behind and be told, "Go} You desire to destroy yourself. Go! Fall in'" Obviously, we do not advise that you do this, but somebody who is malicious may just decide to do it!

What do we advise? The Shari' injunction is very well stated in this Farsi couplet: If you see a blind person walking, and he is heading directly for a well, it is your

compulsory duty to save him. If you are making namaz even, interrupt your namaz and stop him. This is what Islam teaches. The poet says: "If I see a blind person heading towards a well, and I remain silent, I am a sinner."

In this specific situation, one has now broken off one's namaz, and one rushes forward and grabs the blind person's hand, thereby putting into practice what Islam teaches.

If the blind person becomes enraged, and says, "Why are you catching my hand? Leave me alone!" one should explain nicely to him, "Brother, there is a well in front of you." If the blind person is still adamant, and says, "Who are you to tell me? Leave my hand)" and he forces his hand free, then all one can say is, "As you wish," and leave him to his fate.

So, has he been thrown into the well, or has he fallen in of his own free will? As we said, a malicious person may just decide to give him an extra shove from behind! Of course, no respectable person would ever think of doing such a nasty thing!

It is unthinkable that Allah Ta'ala should cause a person to deviate from hidayet and cause him to go astray.

You have not understood the quran shareef. The terminology of the quran shareef is that of Royalty.

As stated already, what is meant is that the Primordial Cause of everything is Allah Ta'ala. Honour and disgrace, guidance and deviation, are all in His Hands.

However, whatever happens to us we invite by our niyets and a'mal (intentions and

deeds). Should one fall into disgrace, or should one go astray, do not implicate Allah Ta'ala -this is what you have brought on yourself. Allah Ta'ala is free of all blame. That is why it is important to safeguard one's niyet. One's niyet should draw one towards good, and one should make dua, "0 Allah Ta'ala! Bless us all with hidayet, and grant us all magfirat."

One's niyet is important. The benefit accruing to one will depend on one's niyet. People visiting a burzug come with different niyets. Different objectives are concealed in the hearts of those sitting with a burzug, developing an association with him, and becoming bay't to him. If one has the niyet to build a strong and firm bond with Allah Ta'ala, then one will benefit.

If the niyet is to attain some worldly objective, then that person will still attain his materialistic objective. In the latter case this person sets out to gain the confidence of the people by his association with a burzug: He wishes to impress others by being a friend of the burzug; or by being bay't to him in the silsilah; or by showing others that he is of his progeny. Such a person will attain his worldly objectives, but his portion in the akhirat will diminish proportionately. Yes, if he dies with iman, he will attain Jannat, but there is no question of his attaining Jannat in the first instance, immediately on dying.

This stands to reason: If all Muslims qualify to enter Jannat straight away on dying, what then is the purpose of making one responsible for the laws of the Shariat? Why is there punishment for acts of kufr, and for crimes committed?

Why differentiate between Haq and Batil! Why label those not obeying the Shariat as transgressors? There must be reasons for all this.

6.NAFSE IMAN AND KAMIL IMAN

The answer is quite simple: Iman can either be simple iman (nafse iman), or perfect iman (kamil iman). Those with kamil iman will qualify for Jannat straight away. Those with nafse iman, iman which is not perfect, will enter Jannat only after their punishment has been meted out.

Yes, as I was saying, a person who has worldly gain as his ohjective will achieve worldly gain. The qissah of the person posing as the son-in-law of Hajee Imdadullah (R.A.) is well known to you. [See "For Friends" Booklet Number Three, p. 14] Did the impostor not achieve his objective? Yes, he did.

BUT! [Incidentally, this "But" is a particle of clarification (istidrak). You may have come across it when studying "Sharah Maktah Amil". It means: to clarify any doubt that has arisen in a preceding statement, in the statement that follows.]

BUT, remember(This person may gain from a worldly point of view, but he is losing much more as far as the akhirat is concerned. He has in mind that he is making an effort to earn a living, what is termed "kasbe dunya". Now "kasb" means "to earn", and "dunya" is made up of two specific components, namely "mal" and 'jah" (wealth and prestige). This person feels that what he is doing is within the confines of iktisabe dunya - earning a living.

7.IKTISABE DUNYA - A MISCONCEPTION

What is the Islamic standpoint? Islam has made iktisabe dunya permissible on

condition that there is no interference with iktisabe akhirat. In other words, if there is no harm to one's deeds and schedules (a'mal and mu'amulat) for the akhirat, then only is earning wealth and dunya permissible. On the other hand, if in seeking dunya, there is interference with one's efforts and one's deeds and schedules for the akhirat, then that earning is not permissible. It is clearly haraam. This is the rule and principle. The basis of our existence has been interfered with. The basis of our existence is to make an effort for the akhirat, and that earning which interferes with this effort, is evil.

The relevant Hadtth shareef states:
This world Is the cultivation ground for the akhirat.

In other words, give priority to the works and deeds for the akhirat. Do not do any such thing that will interfere with the deeds for the akhirat.

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has said To earn dunya ls fardh,but only after performing the fardh for the akhirat.

This is the rule and the principle. But what is the present situation? We see the farmer getting up in the morning and going straight to his farm; the businessman gets up and goes straight to his shop; the worker gets up and goes straight to the office or factory; the student gets up and goes straight to the classroom; etc. Not a single one has performed his namaz!

What each one should have been doing is the following: After getting up and freeing himself from the call of nature, he should have made wudhu and gone to make namaz with Jama't with takbire-e-ula. Then only should he have proceeded to

his work.

Allah Ta'ala Himself has said: (S.62 A. 1 0)

Meaning that, when you have completed your namaz, do not stay put in the masjid. Spread out on the earth.

For what? To go to the cinema? To watch television?

8.TELEVISION

Television is to be found everywhere today, in public places, in business premises, in virtually every home - at times not only one, but two and threes These have been placed ideally to spread shamelessness and to reinforce the roots of apostasy, to lead one astray. Television does not harm others as much as it does the Muslim. Others have already reached the pinnacle of their destruction: here they die, and there they fall! Jahannam is the immediate fate they face, compulsory for those who die with kufr.

Not The damage and harm is to the Muslim and Mu'min. But our Mumin brothers refuse to understand. Therefore, our destruction is progressing headlong. The cinema and television are excellent avenues wherein the destruction of the Muslim is being propagated. Without having to say anything directly, the destruction of the Muslim is under progress.

The cinema and television are a big fitna (evil/corruption), in the same way that it is a fitna - and a great fitna at that - for young lads to keep company with other young lads. It is a great fitna for youths to mix with other youths.!

So, having made namaz, should one leave the masjid for these activities?

No! Never! Your namaz forbids you: "Hold on! Hold on! Just a little while ago you were standing and talking with One Who is Most Exalted, Most Honoured. On your lips was His Sublime and Respected Name. You bowed your back respectfully in front of Him. You rubbed your forehead on the ground in great humility, in front of Him. You sat in front of Him, head bent down, with your heart burning with love for Him. And now you have just moved a few steps away from there. To sit in the cinema, and to watch television, and to go around goggling lecherously at young boys and women, and to look with contempt at others, and to swear and use foul language, and to argue and scream, and to be involved in indecent and forbidden acts - are these the demands of that noble and honourable namaz?"

No! "Fantashiru fil ardh" does not mean all this' What then? Allah Ta'ala says: Spread out on the earth to seek the fadhl of Allah.

9.SEEK THE FADHL OF ALLAH TA'ALA

This sounds strange. To seek the fadl of Allah Ta'ala was the very reason that you had gone to the masjid. You were sitting in the masjid to seek the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

You had obviously gone to seek the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, and not His displeasure. Al'ayazbillah! How can one even think that one goes to the masjid to seek the displeasure of Allah Ta'ala? This is a fine point being brought to your notice, a point you may not find in the kitabs of tafseer.

Another fine point to bring to your notice: The Arabic fi" is used here, and fi" means "in". "Spread out IN the earth." Grammatically the word "ala", meaning "on", would appear to be more appropriate. However, the fi" is used in this instance for greater emphasis: Spread out firmly and enthusiastically, on the earth.

0 ye students! 0 ye ulema ikram! Hearken! These are points you may or may not come across when perusing the kitabs of tafseer.

But, let us carry on: Spread out for what? To seek the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. 'Wabtagu min fadlillah." - Spread out to seek the fad of Allah Ta'ala.
So, the question arises: "0 Allah! We were sitting in the masjid specifically seeking your fadhl. Tell us, what is this other fadhl that we are being ordered to seek?"
The answer is: This fadhl is your rozi, Fadhl, in this instance, is your rizq (sustenance).

You were under the impression that being in the masjid, engaged in your namaz, your tilawat and your tasbih, was the only means of attaining His fadhl. Not at all. Spreading out on the earth, travelling and toiling, is also seeking the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala. This is also ibadat. So, go forth. Seek your sustenance. "Wabtagu mtn fadhlillah."

Another question: Why this unusual manner of ordering us to seek our sustenance? Allah Ta'ala's answer is: "It must not happen that you seek your rizq forgetful of Me! It must not happen that you immerse yourself in your farming, or your business, or whatever work you are doing, forgetful of Me! And, moreover, that whatever you earn, you come to consider to be the result solely of your own toil

and efforts Remember that even the results are through My fadhl, as well as the means: It is I Who have blessed you with an understanding heart, and a brain that can think, and limbs that can work. Have you not stopped to think why the next person has not got what you have? So, is this not My fadhl on you?"

Yet, you consider that what you have earned is solely through your rushing around, through your own efforts, Just like Qarun.
Qarun believed that it was solely through his own knowledge and skills that he had amassed his wealth. Qarun had boasted, "What I have amassed is solely through my own knowledge and expertise. I have taken no help or support, neither from any person nor from that Being Whom you refer to as your Khaliq."
"Believe as you wish," was Allah Ta'ala's response. What happened? Allah Ta'ala's Wrath descended, and both Qarun and his wealth were destroyed'

Remember, not a single item that we possess is ours. Nay, we ourselves cannot lay a claim to ourselves! We belong to another Being. And if we belong to another Being, it follows that whatever we have in our possession also belongs to that Being.

Do you understand?

10.POSSESSING EXCELLENCE

In other words: The moment a right-thinking person with clear understanding can absorb this concept, he will never develop takabbur. No matter how much external excellence he may have achieved, whether it is materially in the form of wealth, or physically in the form of bodily strength, or politically in the form of kingship over

a land or support of the masses, he will never be boastful, or proud, or arrogant. The excellence that he has attained may not be in external (zahiri) qualities, but may be in internal (batini) qualities - the person may have achieved excellence in the field of ilm, and in a'mal, in taqwa, zuhd and ibadat - then too that person with clear understanding will never be boastful, or proud, or arrogant.

That is why the ahlullah, the real ahlullah, do not have even a trace of takabbur. This is because they realise, and accept, that everything is from that Being. The ahlullah understand very well that Haq Ta'ala is the Musabbab al-asbab - that Allah Ta'ala is the Cause of all causes. They, thus, attribute all good to Allah Ta'ala, and never impute that good to any excellence within themselves. They recognise all good attributes to be gifts from Allah Ta'ala, and are ever fearful: "It must not happen that this gift is snatched away!"
That is why they abstain from any such speech, any such action, any such deed, any such work that may incur even an atom's displeasure from Allah Ta'ala, fearing that this may be the cause for that Divine gift to be snatched away.

Do you understand?

At times it may happen that a particular excellence is temporarily taken away. However, this is not always due to some fault on the part of the ahlullah, but the reason for it is to draw the person even closer. Allah Ta'ala desires that this person should direct his attention more fully on Him. Not for a moment should this person's gaze drift to himself and his achievements, but his gaze should be fixed on

Allah Ta'ala even more closely and completely, by an even greater realisation that He is the Bestower of all gifts.

Hadhratwala related the following incident to us:

He was invited to Pakkaghari, obviously with the object of his giving a wa'z (lecture). When the time came, he proceeded to the mimbar and sat down. He read the prelimanary khutba, then recited the introductory ayet, and then...stopped No topic came to mind - his mind was a complete blank! He repeated the same ayet several times, hoping that some topic would come to mind - but still a complete blank! He then thought to himself: "I don't have to speak on a new topic. I have given scores of lectures before, and I will Just repeat one of those." But try as hard as he could, he could not recall a single lecture Finally, he said, "At this moment no topic comes to mind. There will be no lecture." So saying, he climbed off the mimbar and sat down.

This incident illustrates what we have been discussing. I do not have to spell out to you the vastness of Hadhratwala's knowledge, or the high Deeni status that he had attained. Yet, on that occasion, his mind had gone completely blank. At that moment his quwate Ilmiyah was snatched away temporarily, through no fault of his. Allah Ta'ala desires to draw some kamileen and akmileen even closer. They are already clasped to His breast - He wishes to hold them there!

Do you understand?

It is not jaez to be proud or boastful of any excellence that one may possess. That excellence is not self-generated: it is a gift from Allah Ta'ala. If such a gift

can be snatched away without a person transgressing, what chances are there that that gift will remain if one deliberately does wrong? The fear of a decline in that excellence should be ever present.

Yet, what do we see happening? A person attains some wealth, and it goes to his head. The very next thing he does is squander it heedlessly. Soon it is all gone and he goes around borrowing from others. He has neither the capacity to be contented with very little (qana'at), nor is he capable of spending cautiously. He should have had some forethought. But, not The wedding has to be lavish, and so too the occasion of his son's circumcision and aqiqah. So, now he has to go around borrowing.

11.MANGNI, KHATNA AND AQIQAH

Not only that, but nowadays even on the occasion of the betrothal (mangni), there is unnecessary spending. You find that both parties have already had a discussion and have agreed on the marriage. But that does not satisfy everybody, so fifty or a hundred people must be invited and fed and entertained

This happens. As I have said before, I do not mention incidents that have not actually taken place. These incidents are not imaginary. Just a few days ago a person came and related what I have just said. I questioned him: "When the girl's side gave the answer, they had called a few people from the boy's side? Obviously, Just one person will not go alone."

He said, "Yes. Four to six people had gone to get the answer." The answer was

given and confirmed. Yet it was found necessary to gather fifty to a hundred people for meals to re-confirm the agreement.

Please do not take offence, but let me tell you something: The truth is that a Muslim has lost trust and confidence (i'tibar) in his fellow Muslim. Why do I say this? You can see for yourself that, even after the agreement is made, it is still necessary to hold a special function to re-confirm the agreement.

So, the betrothal (mangni), the wedding, the circumcision (khatna), and the aqiqah, have all become major functions. Yes, even the Circumcision and aqiqah have assumed the proportions of a wedding!

Aqiqah, done along Shari' lines, is a simple procedure: The day the child is seven days old, the hair on the head has to be shaved, and silver has to be given to the poor as sadqa. The amount of silver will be equivalent to the weight of the hair shaved off. That is, if you have the means. Also, if you have the means, slaughter one goat if the infant is female, and two goats if the infant is male. Then, like the meat of qurbani, it is preferable to divide this meat into three portions: one portion to be kept for one's own use, one to be distributed to the poor, and the third portion to be distributed to friends and family. Plain and simple.

But no! Fifty to a hundred people must be invited. So, besides the aqiqah animal, an additional cow, or two, have to be slaughtered as well, to feast friends and relatives!

What about the khatna (circumcision)? The Shariat does not stipulate a special function on this occasion. This simple rite does not satisfy everybody, so one finds

the child being painted, and dolled up in new clothes. A special horse is hired, and the child is paraded around the neighbourhood on the horse. Thereafter the circumcision is performed, and everybody is then feasted. Is this not on the scale of a weddings Is this a union (wedding) they are celebrating? This is no union, but a separation - the separation of the foreskin How strange!

When all the money is finished, he goes around borrowing. Nowadays this borrowing is in the form of a loan from the bank, on interest. And when the creditors demand their money, the requests come, "Hadhratjee, please make dua for me. I am piled up in debt." When I ask how did it happen, then all the details come out. That is how I come to know.

Now, the question is: Did Allah Ta'ala command him to get into this plight, or did he bring it on himself? Obviously, he brought it on himself. Allah Ta'ala tried to prevent his getting into trouble. Allah Ta'ala forbade him from wasting his wealth, and from taking loans on interest.

A Hadith shareef of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) states:
Very, Allah Ta'ala has disapproved
three acts for you: to argue and
debate, to squander your wealth,
and to question too much.

These are important matters brought to your attention. It is very necessary that our brothers should know how to live with respect and honour, and how to save themselves from disgrace.

Let us continue. Allah Ta'ala says:

Allah Ta'ala's fadhl is in the masjid as well, but 0 Performers of namaz! Leave the masjid after performing your namaz, and spread out on the earth to seek your rozi. This is also Allah Ta'ala's fadhl(

12.ALIME ASBAB - SUCCESS DEPENDS ON USING THE CORRECT MEANS

Another point to be understood from this ayet is that this world is a world of means - alime asbab: a world related to the utilisation of means to attain a desired objective. In other words, we have to make firm use of the proper and permissible means that Allah Ta'ala has set out, to acquire those objectives which are considered necessary. And thereafter, have hope of success.

As we said, coming to the masjid for namaz is seeking fadhle ilahi. Spreading out on the earth for your rozi is also seeking fadhle ilahi. Look at it this way: In order to seek your rozi your feet have to walk, your hands have to work, and your eyes have to see that work.

These actions of your feet, hands and eyes have a significance no less than the actions of your feet, hands and eyes in going to the masjid and performing your namaz! In both situations, the movements of your feet, hands and eyes are to gain the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala. In both situations you are in ibadat and earning a great reward - thawab and ajr azeem.

Another very subtle point arises here: In both situations you are earning through the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala. Do not even for a moment consider that what you have

earned is due to any excellence within yourself! The walking of your feet, the working of your hands, the looking of your eyes, and the speaking of your tongue, are all through the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala. Do not for a moment consider these to be due to any excellence within yourself, or that any excellence within yourself is the result solely of your own toil and effort. Whatever scholarly accomplishments you may have, or excellence as far as ibadat or taqwa is concerned, do not for a moment think that they are the results of your independant efforts.

We can thus summarise what we have said as follows: Allah Ta'ala says, "In every situation keep your gaze fixed on Me!" Turn your gaze away from yourself, and direct your gaze towards Allah Ta'ala.

13.FANA'YET AND FANA'-AL-FANA'

When you have reached this stage, you have reached the stage called fana'yet. This is the stage where there is complete annihilation of the nafs. So much so, that, irrespective of any excellence and perfection attained with regard to health and strength, wealth, knowledge, good deeds, treasures or territorial gains, one's gaze is on none of these, but is fixed solely on Allah Ta'ala. One has submerged into non-existence. One has made oneself into dust - mita'yet.

When this person progresses further, and reaches a stage where he is not aware even of his own annihilation (fana'yet), he reaches a stage called fana -al fana' - annihilation of annihilation

Do you understand these terms now? Many are confused about these terms. Please remember: Fana' (annihilation) does not mean to go and cut your throat! Committing suicide is a terrible sin, which will land one in Jahannam.

Fana' is that condition where you have separated and isolated your nafs from yourself, so that its opposition ceases completely. Remember that your nafs is the main culprit in an alliance of mischief makers. Your nafs is the king who has taken Shaitaan as an accomplice and advisor (wazier). These two scheme together to teach one to oppose the orders of Allah Ta'ala. Fana'yet is that stage where the opposition of this duet, Badsha Nafs and Wazier Shaitaan, ceases completely, and only the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala remains!

So, how does one reach this stage?
Simply, as follows: Before you say anything, or do anything, think carefully and ask yourself quite honestly, "Will this bring the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, or not?" Only if you can gain the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, speak or act. If the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala cannot be gained, abstain' You have, in this simple way, attained fana'yet. This is the reality (haqiqat) of fana'.

When you go back home, you will be taking with you this fana'yet. This is why you have come here - to attain fana'yet.

Let us continue. 'Wabtagu min fadhlillah." In every situation there is the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala.

14.ANSWER TO A CRTICISM

This brings out another important point:

This is an answer to those Muslims who level the criticism at the molvis that they only want us to stay put in the masjid.
Think for yourself: How can any molvi say this when Allah Ta'ala has specifically commanded that one should spread out on the earth to seek one's rizq, after having completed one's namaz? Is it possible for a molvi to contradict Allah Taala Obviously not.

Yes, a self-styled, itinerant "molvi" may make such a statement. A self-styled, itinerant "molvi" is one who has looked up some stabs at home without a proper ustadh. He is no "molvi" - he is no "maula-wala" (one connected to AIlah Ta'ala). On the contrary, he is a "murli-wala" - he is a turnips

Yes, such a charlatan can be mistaken for a molvi.
For example: You may find that a person has memorised long and involved lectures on the theme of "Seerat-un-Nabi", and he has practiced very hard to deliver them with great oratory. His oratory absolutely moves the audience. At times they are rolling with laughter; at times they cannot hold back tears from rolling down their cheeks. The na'ts are also recited with a superb voice.
Wah! Wah! The audience is charmed, nay, the audience is absolutely captivated But, the moment he leaves, the listeners are as before. Some are enjoying tea and refreshments; others are busy serving sarbat; others are passing the time in their tents; others are conducting their own amusing gatherings; whilst others are busy sight-seeing and window-shopping.

What a tremendously successful occasion) According to his niyet, each one has achieved his objective. The hosts have received their share of the adulation for inviting the speakers; those in charge of the arrangements have received their praise for good organisation; the speakers and reciters of na'ts have been congratulated on their superb oratory and recitals; of course, these have also been reimbursed for their travelling expenses, and they have also received handsome hand-outs, depending on the financial status of the hosts; and that person who has shredded his kurta in a fit of passion, has not been forgotten - he has been given a new kurta!

Verily, deeds depend on niyets.

Each individual will be rewarded according to his niyet

The purpose of a wa'z (lecture) is for Deeni benefit, that the hearts of the people be turned away from Dunya and be instilled with a yearning for the Akhirat. If this is not achieved, of what value is all that praise and congratulations?

So, a real molvi - not a self-styled molvi - can never say, "Brother, after your namaz, stay put and do not leave the masjid," when the Maula is saying, "After your namaz, spread out on the earth to seek your rizq". May Allah Ta'ala forgive the critics for their slander.

'W'abtagu min fadhlillah" - seek the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala. Now, what is the characteristic of seeking the fadhl of Allah Taala This is stated in the words that follow: - And remember Allah Ta'ala in abundance.

15.THE ESSENCE OF 'WAZKURULLAH KATHIRIN"

Allah Ta'ala is saying, "You should understand that the rozi you are earning is My fadhl. But do not be so involved in your work that you forget Me. It should not happen that you earn indiscriminately, not taking into account what is ja'ez and what is na-Ja'ez, what is halaal and what is haraam. I had ordered you to seek My fadhl. So, how can such indiscriminately earned rozi be considered to be My fadhl? Moreover, when the time of the next namaz arrives, do not be so involved in earning that you do not remember even to perform your namaz. Do not let this happens" This is what Allah Ta'ala is saying in the phrase "wazkurullah Katharine". Keep remembering AIlah Ta'ala.

Here is a question: Is the act of remembrance (yad) a function of the lips or the heart? Obviously, the heart is the seat of remembrance, whereas the lips only express His Name. So, what Allah Ta'ala is saying, is: "0 Mu'mlns! 0 Musallis! 0 Performers of namaz! When you set out to seek My fadhl, when you set out to seek your rozi, do not become so involved that you do not remember Me in your hearts. Remember Me in your hearts, not in a cursory manner, but in abundance The object of this remembrance should be that you are acutely aware of what is halaal and what is haraam, of what is jaez and what is na-Ja'ez, of what causes grief to others and what brings happiness, of what causes harm to others and what brings comfort and ease. This is the way to earn your rizq, by remembering Me in abundance in your hearts."

Do you understand? By the tawfiq of AIlah Ta'ala, the ayet of the Quran shareef is being expounded.

"Katharine" - in abundance. This will only become possible if your namaz is also performed in abundance. That is, when you continuously perform all your namazes at their proper times and in the proper manner, observing all the adabs with proper care.

16.WHAT IS THERE IN NAMAZ?

Namaz is a composite zikr from beginning to end, having takbir, tahmid, tasbih, and other zikr in a specialised form. Also when you commence your namaz, do you not lift your hands to your ears? With this motion you are taking Dunya out of your heart and, with the back of your hands, throwing Dunya behind your back. You are signifying, "From this moment I am taking the love of Dunya and any connection with it, out of my heart, and pushing these behind me."

This act has a deeper significance: You are demonstrating the practical side of "La ilaha illallah", the negation of all deities, except Allah, referred to as "nafl-athbat". So that, by the motion of your hands, you are throwing all the deities inherent in "Dunya" out of your heart and behind you, pronouncing simultaneously "Allahu akbar".

You then fold your hands, the right over the left, placing them just below the navel. The latifa nafs - the focal point where the nafs is situated - is below the navel. By firmly folding your hands below the navel, you are telling yourself, "I am now holding firmly on to my nafs so that Dunya, which I have Just now thrown behind me, should not surreptitiously come back."

Yes, learn how to make namaz(These are aspects to understand and inculcate within oneself.

You have recited the takbir, allahu-akbar. Now you recite the tasbih', Subhanallah. Then follows the tahmid. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds.

When one addresses somebody important, and one has a request to make, it is only appropriate to commence with words of respect. Is this not what you do when writing a letter of request to some important person? Similarly, when speaking to Allahu subhana wa ta'ala, we start with takbir and tasbih' and tahmid.

We then say h ¿gJI¿4¿Jl¿¿l Before the actual request we first set forth the Majestic Status of our Sustainer: "Most Merciful of all those who show mercy. Master of the Day of Judgement."

Then comes an affirmation,¿p1Ql "Only Thee do we worship. That is, we are seeking Thy pleasure."

This is followed by a statement of our complete dependence on Him:

"(Only) Thee do we ask for help." In these words we are saying, "The lifting of our hands and the throwing of Dunya behind us, the folding of our hands, the words of takbir, tasbih and tahmid that issued from our lips, were only possible through Your aid and assistance. Without Your continuous support we would not be able to make any lbadat."

17.THE USE OF "WE"

There are some ulema and tuleba present who will appreciate the following subtle points:

In the phrase "iyakana'budu" the plural "na'" is used, meaning -"Only Thee do we worship." The question to ask is: Why is the singular "I" not used?

Point number one: When performing namaz with jama't, the imam is reciting on

behalf of all those standing behind him. The "we" is a collective plea, on behalf of all those who are present.
However, even when making namaz by oneself, one still says "we". Why?
That brings me to the second point: That human performing namaz by himself, is not solitary. There is a rooh attached to a physical body. This physical body, in turn, is not a single entity, but is comprised of head and trunk, hands and feet, eyes, ears, heart, lungs, etc. This physical body is covered by clothes - clothes bought with his money - so that his wealth is attached to him. Thus, the "we" is pronounced on behalf of all the different parts of his body, his rooh, and his wealth, all being involved in the ibadat of Allah Taala.

This servant is thus presenting this collective whole in front of Allah Ta'ala, from head to foot, what is external (zahir) and what is internal (batin). He is making the lbadat of Allah Taala with this whole entity. He is saying, "0 Allah This body is a mere shell, and the namaz of this mere shell would be meaningless. 0 Allah! The plea is therefore, on behalf of the composite whole. 0 Allah(This is no ordinary task. Only with Your aid and continuous support can this lbadat be correct in all its external (zahiri) and internal (batini) aspects."

These are the preliminary statements made by the servant. The actual request is still to come. The grandeur of the request is such, that it demands such a magnificent introduction. And what is the request?

18.THE REQUEST

"Show us the straight path. The path of those whom Thou have favoured; Not (the path) of those who earn Thine anger, nor of those who go astray. Ameen"

He is saying, "0 Allah! I need to tread on the straight path, the path that is completely straight and absolutely perfect - the siratul mustaqim! Keep me firm and steadfast on it. Let me not stagger, let me not stray, neither to the left, nor to the right. Keep me wholly on it. So that my eyes do not look at any wrong, my tongue does not speak any wrong, my ears do not listen to any wrong, my heart does not harbour any wrong, my hands do no wrong, and my feet do no wrong."
He is asking for such steadfastness that he does not have to stop and think - automatically all the functions of his body will be free from wrongdoing. His heart should be so thoroughly conditioned that he walks on this path freely and naturally.

He continues, "0 Allah' There are many who claim to be on the straight path, the siratul mustaqim. However, my request is special. I desire the siratul mustaqim of those who have already received Your blessings, those blessings connected with Your pleasure."
Who are these special persons who are of the "in'amta alayhim'

Elsewhere in the quran shareef Allah Ta'ala has mentioned them as being:
...of the ambiya, and the saints, and the martyrs, and the righteous.
(S.4A.69)

Those on whom the ne'mats of Allah Ta'ala are showered are the ambiya, the siddiqin, the shuhada and the salihin.

"0 Allah! This is the siratul mustaqim I am requesting. And I am specifically rejecting the path of those who also claim to be on the straight path, but who earn Thy anger (the Yahud), and who are astray (the Nasara and mushriks.) ¿¿e' - fi$4¿¿¿ No. Not the path of these. My request is for t e pat¿ of those who earn Thy ne'mats."

Having made his request, he himself says "Amin" - Qabul! Accepted

Have you understood? Have you now learnt how to make namaz, or not yet?

Iman has been established. When you make ibadat in this manner, with this mental approach, whether this attitude is maintained afterwards or not, at that moment you have established iman. You have attained ikhlas (sincerity).

19.WEHM - UNNECESSARY DOUBTS

Those sufis with meticulous personalities, however, have unnecessary doubts instilled in them by Shaitan. Shaitan troubles them considerably, especially in regard to two aspects of the Deen.

FIRSTLY: Zahiri paki and na-paki. External purity and impurity. That is, purity of clothes, body, etc., and correctness of wudhu and ghusl.

SECONDLY: Batini paki and na-paki. Internal purity and impurity. That is, purity of intention, namely ikhlas and riya.

Zahiri paki/na-paki: Here is an example from the first category, external purity: Some blood falls on the clothes. This person washes the clothes thoroughly, but the stain of the blood remains. In order to remove the stain, he washes the garment again and again. The stain is rubbed and scraped. But the stain is such that it does

not go away. This person thinks that his garment is still na-pak. Must the stain now be cut out to get the garment pak? Mind you, that was the order that Allah Ta'ala gave the previous ummats, that the na-paki on a garment should be cut out and discarded in order to achieve pak1.

But look at the mercy of Allah Ta'ala. You are the ummat of His Habib Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam), and for you the instructions are changed: "You are not to cut out the na-paki, but wash it with water three times and the garment will be pak, whether the stain remains or not. By doing it your way, are you not trying to fulfill your whims and fancies contrary to My orders? Are you trying to confront the Shariat with your personal prejudices?

"That would be an indirect criticism of Met Is this the way you value My mercy on you? I could have left the original command that the na-paki should be cut out, but My mercy on you is such that you need only wash out the na-paki three times. The garment is now pak. If the stain remains, leave it! Go and perform your namaz."

You can see how Shaitan presents himself to oppose Rahman, and prevents this person from performing his namaz with jama't.

Another example:

Sufi saheb is in the toilet where he has just passed urine. But his istinja does not come to an end. He uses jug upon jug of water to wash himself, but still he is not satisfied about his paki. In the meantime the jama't namaz in the masjid has also ended, but here this poor fellow is still busy washing himself.

These sufi-type temperaments have no doubts when it comes to halaal and haraam - these are clear-cut to them - and they abstain from anything haraam and doubtful. Their rozi is halaal tayyib. It is in connection with paki/na-paki that they encounter major problems.

Here is another example: (Please note that these examples are actual incidents. As I have said before, only actual incidents are related to you.) There was a rats. He was a mottiqi, very conscientious about his Deen. He made ghusl, got dressed and came out of the bathroom. He sat down. Now the doubts came. He summoned the servant and ordered him to prepare the water again. He then went and made ghusl again, got dressed in another set of clean clothes, and came out again. Again the doubts came. Once more he summoned the servant to prepare the water, and again he went to make ghusl. This happened several times.

What was the doubt troubling him? We have noted already that this person had taqwa, and he had ikhlas. However, he was over-conscientious, and his mind reasoned as follows: "When making ghusl, water splashed on the walls. Most probably some droplets splashed back on to me and I became na-pak, and when I got dressed. my clothes were also contaminated with these droplets. So, I have to make ghusl again, and put on another set of clean clothes."

When making wudhu, he would be so doubtful of its being correct that he would use several large lotas of water before he was finally satisfied. Doubts came into his mind and troubled him with childish obstinacy.

When he came to Thana Bhawan (to the khanqa) and listened to Hadhratwala's discourses, all these needless doubts disappeared. A small lota of water was sufficient for his wudhu. Also, having made ghusl once, he did not unnecessarily repeat the ghusl a second arid a third time. His troublesome doubts had vanished.

Batik paki/na-paki These sufi-types are troubled by unnecessary doubts concerning not only external (zahiri) paki and na-paki, examples of which have been given above, but also concerning internal (batini) pak and na-paki, namely ikhlas (sincerity) and its opposite, riya. They constantly search within themselves to detect any change in their ikhlas. They become very distraught and are greatly disturbed by the doubt that they are directing their thoughts towards the creation and not the Creator. Has the ikhlas not changed into riya?

For example: "I was making namaz and went into ruku and then made sajdah, with great concentration, when somebody came by and stood looking at me. Has his presence not changed my intention, and riya come into me?"

Another example: "I was making zikr. Somebody who was passing by, decided to sit and watch me make zikr. With him watching me, did I not now develop riya?"

Another example: "I was making tilawat of the quran shareef in a very sweet-sounding voice. Somebody came by and stopped to listen. With him as an audience, did I not now develop riya?"

Another example: "I was in a quiet corner, my head bowed down in yad-e-flabby (remembrance of Allah Ta'ala), and making zikr softly (zikr-e-khafi), when

somebody noticed me. Did he not now get the false impression that I had ascended to the Arsh?"

This "riya" is now everywhere. It intrudes in his namaz, in his tilawat., in his zikr jall1 (loud zikr), in his zikr khafi (soft zikr), and this is upsetting him tremendously. This apparent internal na-paki of riya, this apparent show when the gaze of the creation falls on him, is now contaminating his every lbadat.

Why so? The reason why such thoughts are upsetting him is that he has not sat in the company of some muhaqqiq in order to learn about the haqiqat (reality) of riya and ikhlas. The moment he understands what riya really is, his mind will have overcome this obstacle, and he will be left with ikhlas alone. There will not be even a trace of riya. So, it is necessary to understand the reality of ikhlas and riya.

20.HAQIQAT OF IKHLAS AND RIYA

The haqiqat is as follows: Both ikhlas and riya are ikhtiari. We can chose one or the other. The order given to us is to develop ikhlas and eliminate riya. Whatever we have been ordered to do, is always something that is within our choice and power (ikhtiar). Therefore, it follows that attaining ikhlas is ikhtiari, and eliminating riya is also tkhtlyari - we have the choice and power to do both.

Now, how do we proceed?

As follows: Look at your niyet - your heartfelt intention and resolve -over which you have full ikhtiar.

Ask yourself: "Was it my niyet to gain the honour and esteem of the creation, to engender in the hearts of the creation my greatness, to impress them with my piety,

so that all these now become the means for my amassing wealth from them? "Also, that they should now look at me with awe and become my devotees, and kiss my hands and fall at my feet?" Was this your niyet or not?

You are now in deep thought.
You then reply: "Hadhrat, having given it thought, and after listening to your explanation, I can quite confidently say that none of these objectives was intended by me."

That being the case, that none of these objectives was in your niyet, then there is absolutely no question of there being riya!

Let us go a step further. Listen carefully now! None of these other objectives was in your niyet. But, at that moment, you were not consciously aware that your niyet was to attain the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, even then there is no riya - you have still attained radha-e-ilahi, the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala(

0 you sufia-e-ikram' Has riya now gone or not? [A loud "YES" from those present]

You are terrified for nothing. You should now have peace of mind. By the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala, and the barkat of Hadhratwala, the topic if ikhlas and riya has been elucidated for you.

Let me put it together for you again: Riya results from a definite nlyet. If raga is absent, then its apposite, lkhlas, is present. The two cannot co-exist, and neither can both be absent. If the one is absent, its opposite is present. Thus, if riya is not

there, then ikhlas is present, even though at that particular moment you are not aware of making a specific intention of attaining the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

Yes, it is a different matter if, by your ikhtiyar, you have the definite niyet of radha-e-ilahl in mind as well. This stage is higher and superior (ala wa afzal). Merely having no riya is the lowest stage of ikhlas, but it need not be scorned, because eliminating riya becomes the means of attaining ikhlas. Just like a light-bulb is the means by which light radiates, similarly eliminating riya is the means of allowing the radiance of lkhlas to manifest itself. This ikhlas can then be developed to its highest form.

These are thoughts which this faqir is presenting to you. May Allah Ta'ala make it that we may all understand.

You have come here for your islah (self-rectification). It is now a matter of being firm and resolute, so that you can tread the path of islah with an even temperament (mustaqil mizaj). Many are the ones who come here, but coming here is one thing, and attaining one's objective is another. Attainment is dependant on treading the path correctly.,

21.ATTAINING ONE'S OBJECTIVE

To continue:

This topic arose in the course bf discussing the ayet

Bear in mind what has just been discussed concerning riya and ikhlas. Now, when this person sets out to seek his rozi (the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala), he may not have the awareness of Allah Ta'ala in his heart, but he stays away from haraam, his earnings

are halaal; he stays away from na-Ja'ez, his rozi is ja'ez. His objective has been attained. That is, he abstained from haraam and na ja'ez, he avoided illegal possession of others' wealth, and he took care not to cause inconvenience and grief to others, and he did not hurt their feelings. The thought of Allah Ta'ala, and attaining the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, may or may not have been present in his heart at that time, but he has attained ikhlas - he has attained radha-e-ilahl

He has attained his objective, which was to follow the orders of Allah Ta'ala. The means to this objective was to have the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala (yad-e-ilahi) in his heart, intentionally and consciously, and to maintain this remembrance: "Zikran kathirin" was the means. Whether the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala (yad-e-flabby) remains subsequently in his heart or not, is secondary: one has to see primarily whether one's actions will earn the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala or not.

Do you understand?

The zikr is a means to an end. To be in zikr all the time is not an end in itself. If unbroken zikr-lisani and yad-e-ilahi were ends in themselves, then all Muslims would be sinners, because this task is not possible. The objective is to be obedient to Allah Ta'ala in the correct manner, and the zikr is one of the means employed to attain this objective. That person who has attained this objective will be considered to be a zakir:

Every obedient (servant) of Allah is a zakir (Hadith shareef)

You will understand this better by the following:

Whoso obeyeth the Messenger obeyeth Allah (S.4 A.80)

The means employed to be obedient to Allah Ta'ala is the obedience to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam). The one is the means, the other is the objective.

To continue:

We were saying that, having made your namaz, go out to seek the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala, i.e. go out to seek your rozi, and consider even your effort to be the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala. See that you do not land yourself in a situation that the yad of Allah Ta'ala does not permeate your entire being, and you then start earning indiscriminately. Be sure to remember Allah Ta'ala, in that you take note of halaal and haraam, ja'ez and na-Ja'ez, and that you do not forget to perform the next namaz when the time arrives. Thus, while you are in the lbadat of earning your rozi, and you are anxiously awaiting the time of the next namaz, fearful lest you miss it, it is as if you are in namaz all the time! For, it is stated in the Hadith shareef:

While a person waits for the next namaz, he is in namaz.

He may be farming or trading, but in his heart is the concern for the next namaz, that the time of the next namaz must not pass by, and thereby he misses his namaz. If this is his condition, then he is in namaz.

22.WALI-E-KAMIL & WALI-E-NAQIS - IMAN-E-KAMIL & IMAN-E-NAQIS - AND SUCCESS

Let us go further. Once you have understood the above, then there is another aspect to understand: Initially this Mumin had a ta'alluq ma'allah (bond with Allah Ta'ala) that was simple, and based solely on iman (nafse iman). But now he has forged a

special and a strong bond with Allah Ta'ala, as seen by his condition as described above. He has progressed from simple iman (nafse iman) to iman-e-kamil and deendar-e-kamil (Kamil = accomplished/perfect). This state is that of a wall.

Previously, when he had only simple iman (nafse (man), he was a wali too, but he was not a kamil wali. He was a naqis wali, a deficient one, and a very deficient one at that!

To understand this better, take the following illustration: If a person has one rupee, or even a hundred rupees, will he be called wealthy? Obviously not. Undoubtedly, being in possession of one or a hundred rupees is, technically, "possession of wealth." However, this person has no assets, no property, etc., so that he cannot, in reality, be called wealthy. Similarly, that person who has nafse iman, in that he has correct aqa'id (beliefs) of Islam, but he has nothing else, will be said to have iman, but not wealth of iman - he does not have imane kamil.

Imane kamil is attained when he has reached that stage that has been expounded to you in explaining the meaning of the ayet:

Faiza kudi-a-tis salato

This ayet ended with- la-allakum tuflihoon. It means that, only now, after fulfilling all the necessary requirements, now have hope that you will succeed fully. "Falah" means success, and it appears in the azan, after the call to "salah". So, success is to be hoped for after "salaried" comes into one, as explained above, when one's efforts are in perfect order, and completely correct. When external (zahiri) and

internal (batini) rectitude comes into you in a perfect manner, then have hope of success - not just partial success, but full and complete success.

The object is to become a kamil Mu'min, so that one may have kamil success: the pre-condition for kamil success is to attain kamil iman. Nobody wants partial success. Even less does anybody want failure. A businessman does not wish to run a business showing no profits, even less a business that shows losses. If he invests 100,000 rupees, and his returns are exactly 100,000 rupees, showing no profit, he cannot be called successful. If his returns are 100,001 rupees, showing a profit of one rupee, he can still not be called successful. He is successful only if he has substantial profits.

This is the situation in worldly commerce (tijarate dunya). But understand well that Allah Ta'ala has sent us from the alime-arwah (world of souls) for commerce for the Hereafter (tijarate Akhirat). To be successful in this tijarate Akhirat it is not sufficient to have only iman (nafse iman), but one should have kami1 iman, as has been explained above. Only then can one be fully successful.
Why have I used the term "tigarat'? It is because this term is used in the quran shareef.
Allah Ta'ala says:
0 ye who believe(Shall I show
you a commerce that will save you from a painful doom?) (S.61 A.10)

Is this question addressed to the kuffar or to the Muslim? Obviously to the Mumin. So, being a Mumin - one who has already brought iman - why should such a

person be warned about a severe punishment? The reason is that being a Mumin is not sufficient. As yet there is no question of complete success. There is still some commerce to undertake, involving the demands of iman. Then only can he hope for complete success.

Do you understand?

Now, what is this commerce that Allah Ta'ala wants us to undertake? The ayet continues:

Ye should believe in Allah and His messenger...

Firstly, we have to bring iman on Allah Ta'ala, and on Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam). "To have iman" is a phrase that includes both having iman on Allah Ta'ala and on Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam). If a person brings iman on Allah Ta'ala, but not on Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam), he is not a Mumin. Then comes:

...and should strive in the path of Allah with your wealth and your lives.

- that you should make full effort, physically and financially, zahiri and batini as one does in any commercial activity. In worldly trade and commerce we see to what extent people exert themselves physically and financially. Businessmen do not just relax at home, but travel from city to city, from country to country, east, west, south and north. Also, they do not keep their money locked up, but make good use of it to further their trade. In a similar way, it is Allah Ta'ala's order that we make full effort in the path of Allah Ta'ala -that we virtually finish ourselves, our lives and our wealth, in the path that Allah Ta'ala has ordered us to tread. Then

only will you have complete success, 0 Mumins, and not the partial success that merely bringing iman has.

Let us put it all together again:

When you have completed your namaz, spread out on the earth to seek your raze You should understand that the rozi you are earning is also the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala, and not solely the result of your effort. And your effort should be such that your zahir and your batin should be immersed in the yad of Allah Ta'ala. In other words, you have submerged your body and your inner being in the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala. Now have hope of full success. With kamil iman comes kamil success. The level of success will depend on the level of your zikr.

Do you understand?

23.THE Qur'an SHAREEF - A "ZIKR"

Having understood this then let us carry on and expand a bit more on "zikr":

Lo! We, even We reveal the Reminder (zikr), and lo!

We verily are its Guardian (S.15 A.9)

The quran shareef has been called the "Zikr". Applying "zikran kathiran" in this context, we can conclude that we should acquire "the quran shareef in abundance". This means that the words of the quran shareef should be recited correctly "in abundance", the correct meanings of the quran shareef should be understood "in abundance", and the orders of the quran shareef should be put into practice fully and correctly "in abundance".

Allah Ta'ala has given the kyar many hard knocks in the Qur'an shareef.
For example, Allah Ta'ala states:

...comfort of the life of the world is but brief as compared to the Herafter. (S.9 A.38)

Life in this world is but for a few days. Here, and in several other places, Allah Ta'ala draws the attention of the Mu'min away from life in this world towards the akhirat. The Mumin, therefore, does not content himself with this temporary dunya: his gaze is turned away from this dunya towards the everlasting akhirat. So he busies himself with the tijarat for the akhirat.

24.THE Qur'an SHAREEF - A MIRACLE

Why does the Mumin take this ayet so seriously? The reason is that the quran shareef is that miracle that was revealed as a proof of the nabuwat of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam), and this is sufficient for the Mumin.
The quran shareef is such a miracle that the most accomplished composers of Arabia have thrown in the towel, and have accepted that the quran shareef is the Word of Allah, and have admitted to their helplessness in that they could not compile anything like it. For those who have brought iman, the Mumlns, this acknowledged miracle, which is the quran shareef, is therefore sufficient. When the Mum' has accepted the miracle of the quran shareef, and thereby he has also accepted the nabuwat of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam), then it becomes a simple matter to accept the statement that this dunya is "mata'un qalil". This statement is then sufficient for him to turn his gaze away from this dunya, and get

on with the task of tijarat for the akhirat. He then busies himself with those amilus saliha (virtuous deeds) which appear in the quran shareef, and abstains from those manhi anha (prohibited deeds) which also appear in the quran shareef, both of which are associated with iman. This the Mu'min does at the zahiri and batini levels.

For example: Just as he has left off those substances which intoxicate his body at the zahiri level, so he leaves off takabbur (arrogance) which intoxicates his ego at the batini level Etc., etc.

In this way he pursues the amilus saliha (virtuous deeds) and abstains from the manhi anha (prohibited deeds) until his last breath. He thus progresses from simple iman (nafse iman) to kamil iman, attaining kamil success.

Having accepted the quran shareef as a miracle, what are the roles of Hadith shareef and fiqah?

25.FIRSTLY: HADITH SHAREEF

This is also from the quran shareef. The quran shareef states:

. And whatsoever the Messenger glveth you, take it,

And whatsoeoer he forblddeth,abstain from it). (S.59 A.7)

What was it that Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) gave? He gave certain instructions, which we call Hadith shareef. So, we are ordered to take these instructions. So, Hadith shareef is also the Word of Allah Ta'ala through Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam). It is wahl gair matlu (revelation not for

recitation). In other words, the quran shareef is the text, and Hadith shareef forms the explanatory notes.

26.SECONDLY: FIQAH

This is also kitabullah. The quran shareef states:

...if they had referred it tothe Messenger and such of them as are in authority, those among them who are able to think out the matter, would have known it. (S.4 A.83)

'Yastambitunahu" - This "istimbat" is brought about through fiqah. Fiqah is the means by which the orders are clarified and systematised.

For example: The Qur'an shareef has orders in it concerning wudhu, namaz, roza, halaal and haraam, etc., etc. These orders do not appear in just one section under specific headings, but are scattered in various sections. The compilation of all these topics in a classified manner under specific headings, is called fiqah. In this way all references to taharat have been extracted from different sections, placed in a specific chapter, and labelled "Kitabut Taharat".

In a similar way, all references to namaz have been extracted from various sections, and compiled into a specific chapter labelled "Kitabus Salat". In this way numerous other topics scattered in different sections of the quran shareef have been extracted and compiled into definite classified chapters. This compilation is now called fiqah.

So, the quran shareef is the text, the elucidation of this text is Hadith shareef, and the classified chapters are termed fiqah. All three, the quran shareef, the Hadith

shareef, and fiqah have to be looked at as a composite whole comprising "Kitabullah".

Do you understand?

27.MUNKAR - THOSE WHO RE JECT

Some say (and you would have heard it too), "Our belief is that only the quran shareef can act as proof." They reject Hadith shareef -they are "munkare Hadith". Others will accept the quran shareef and the Hadith shareef, but they reject fiqah - they are "munkare fiqah".

We have adequately shown their wrong concepts. Hadith shareef and fiqah, together with the quran shareef, form "Kitabullah", which forms the basis of proving any point in Islam. If one has proved a point from any one of these three sources, then that is adequate proof for that point to form part of the Shariat.

Therefore, for any person to say, "Prove your point from the quran shareef only," is incorrect, because this very Kitabullah instructs one to accept the word of Allah Ta'ala's Rasul (sallallahu alaihi wasallam). Use his sayings as evidence.

Here is an illustration to explain this point:

In a court-case, if the plaintiff (the person having a claim on another person) wants to prove his claim, he needs an independant witness. If he has such a witness, his claim will be said to be substantiated. If the defendant (the person against whom the claim is made) now says that he is not prepared to accept the evidence of the witness, and that he will only accept the plaintiffs claim against him if the judge himself gives evidence, then this argument of the defendant will not be accepted. It

is the judge who has ruled that the evidence of the witness will serve as substantiating proof. The defendant will be forced to abide by this ruling of the judge, and accept the evidence of the witness.

If you understand this illustration, then you will understand why 1t is wrong for a person to put forward the argument, "I will only accept what you claim to be the Shariat, if you can prove it from the quran shareef." It is Allah Ta'ala who has already stated in that very quran shareef the rule that the evidence of His Rasul (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) is sufficient as substantiating proof

Ay-yuhattullab! 0 ye students' Do you understand?

Today, several aspects of suluk have been placed before you. The topics of paki and na-paki, both external (zahiri) and internal (batini), have been discussed. The discussion on batini paki and na-paki touch on the subjects of ikhlas and riya, and the roles that doubts and thoughts (wehm) play. The topics of plain or simple iman (nafse iman) and perfect or complete iman (kamile iman), as well as the method of attaining perfection (kamal), have also been discussed, as well as the topics of partial and complete success.

Kamal (perfection) is an objective in every sphere, therefore, in the sphere of iman kamal also becomes an objective. This perfection in iman is attained on the basis of the quranic ayet recited previously. This means that kamale iman is dependant on kamale ittiba' (perfect obedience) of the Shariat, both zahiri and batini.

By the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala, and the barkat of Hadhratwala, various topics have flowed from my lips to settle in your hearts, to remain with you, not only for the duration of your stay here, but to remain with you till you reach your homes, to be of use to you in your home environment and at work.

Tijarat for the akhirat! 0 you Mu'min! After your namaz-e-haqiqi -your actual namaz - you are in namaz all the time because of your anxious anticipation of the next namaz. If you are all the time in ikhlas, and if you are all the time in kamale iman, then you will be in kamale success.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the tawfiqat arzani to tread along the path of His radha all the time. Kudha Hafiz.

Chapter No.:

6

1.FOREWORD

Allhamdu-lillah, Through the fadhl (bounty) of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat (blessings) of our sheikh, Masihul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Muhammed Masihullah Khan sahib (r.a.), this sixth booklet is now being published.

The sadness of Hadhratji (r.a.) passing away has been felt by all who had come to know him either directly, or indirectly through those who were connected to him and through his illuminating teachings. The loss felt, as has been pointed out by many others, is the loss of separation. This is apart from the inner twinge of regret at not having taken full advantage of his sohbat (company) while he was still with us.

The following words of Hadhratji (r.a.) take on a very real meaning at this moment in time: "Your sheikh will not always be with you, but his teachings will be with you." May Allah Ta'ala give us all the tawfiq to act according to his precious teachings.

The passing away of the masha'ekh of Tasawwuf does not cause the principles of suluk to alter. Hadhratji (r.a.) took special care to explain these principles in his discourses. These principles still operate. Yes, a sheikh-e- kamil may modify a principle in its expressivity during his life-time, depending on varying circumstances, but the basic principle will still remain operative.

A classic example is the principle of eating less. This is one of the four principles involved in mujahadah jismani. This principle is still applicable. However, we have been advised NOT to follow the extremely strict discipline that Imam Ghazali

(r.a.) advocates in his kitab "Tabhli gh-ud-Din". The principle remains, but its application is modified.

We are highly indebted to Hadhratji (r.a.) for setting out not only the principles of Tasuwwuf, but also other invaluable principles of practical value in our daily lives. Hadhratji's (r.a.) teachings remain with us as vivid splashes of light in an ever increasingly dark world. May we all continue to benefit consistently and continuously from these teachings. Dr. Ismaiel Mangera.

[This is a translation of a majlis-e-khas held by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Masihullah Khan Sahib (r.a.), in Jalalabad, India, on the 4th October, 1989, corresponding to the 4th Rabi-al-Awwal, 1410].

2.IBADAT - WORSHIP

Of the 24 hours of our day and night, setting aside 6 to 7 hours for sleep, the rest of the time is solely for ibadat! To repeat: setting aside 6 to 7 hours for sleep from the 24 hours of our day and night, the remainder of the time is solely for ibadat!

Those of you sitting at the back, can you hear? You are not sitting there mindlessly? Of course not.

3.SLEEPING

Do you understand? To set aside 6 to 7 hours for sleep from the 24 hours of one's day and night, is absolutely necessary. Yes, it may occasionally happen that one does not manage to sleep a full 6 to 7 hours, but one should never make a habit of

sleeping less than 6 to 7 hours per 24 hours. I repeat: Never but never make it a habit to sleep less than 6 to 7 hours.

It may happen during travels or when one is ill, that one does not sleep well - these unavoidable, excusable situations are a different matter. Occasionally one may sleep less due to special circumstances and this is not contrary to the rule we have set forth: One should not make it a habit to sleep less than 6 to 7 hours per 24 hours, but should try to sleep the full 6 to 7 hours.

4.EATING

When it comes to eating, one's routine should be to eat a stomach-full. Taking into account that each person's level of hunger is different, nevertheless, one should have the habit of eating sufficient to fill one's stomach.

Again, it may occasionally happen that one eats less than this, but nevertheless, one should never but never make it a habit to continually eat less than a full stomach. To eat less occasionally due to special circumstances is not contrary to the rule laid down: One should have the habit of eating sufficient to fill one's stomach.

5.MIXING WITH OTHERS

However, when it comes to mixing with others, do not associate with others to one's "stomach-full"! (This is a different mode of putting the concept to you!) Do not mix with others to one's fill. Meet others to the extent of necessity, but not more.

This meeting of others to the extent of necessity is also included in ibadat; just as the habit of eating to one's fill is ibadat; just as the habit of sleeping to one's fill, 6 to 7 hours, is also ibadat.

Have you understood these concepts? If so, let us go further.

6.SPEAKING

When it comes to speaking, do not speak with others to one's "stomach-full". Speak with others only to the extent of necessity. Necessary speech is also included in ibadat.

O little ones, do you understand? On the one hand you are told: Eat to your fill; sleep to your fill (6 - 7 hours). And now, on the other hand, you are told: Do not meet others to your fill; and do not speak to your fill. To the contrary, meet others only to the extent of necessity and speak only to the extent of necessity. All these four activities - to eat to one's fill, to sleep to one's fill (6 - 7 hours), not to meet to one's fill and not to speak to one's fill - if performed within their limits, as explained, all attain the status of ibadat.

7.PURPOSE OF MAN'S CREATION

This is the purpose for which Man was created. This coming into existence of Man (Insan), this "manufacturing" of Insan, is for this purpose only, that he should make the ibadat of Allah Ta'ala.

And I have not created the Jinn and Mankind but that they should worship Me. (S.51; A.56)

This is the object and purpose why Insan has been created. And if Insan deviates from this objective, then he has fallen from his status as Insan - in appearance he is alive, but he is actually dead!

What does this mean? It means that he is now of no use. Having deviated from his objective, instead of being useful and successful, he is now useless and a failure. To put it another way: When an object has been created for a specific purpose and it does not fulfil that purpose, then it is useless and a failure.

For example: Take this pen in my hand. It has been made for the purpose of writing and not for eating. Clear and simple. If it cannot write, then it is not fulfilling the object for which it has been manufactured. It then becomes useless and redundant. It is a failure. Will you take extra care to keep it safely in your pocket or with your other writing materials? Of course not. You will throw it in the rubbish bin.

Do you understand this example?

So, in a similar way, if this human being does not fulfil the object for which he has been created, he is useless and redundant. Throw him also in the rubbish bin! This Insan has deviated from the purpose for which he has been created. So, being useless, having left off his objective, cast him also into the rubbish bin!

Yes, he may still have some little use as yet. So let him be. Let us not be hasty. He may not have the enthusiasm, the vim and vigour he should have, but he may not be completely dead. He may be of some use, so let him be.

Take the example of this pen again: It may not write. However, there may be a remedy available - the fountain pen may be filled with ink again, or the ball- pen may be fitted with a refill. Then it will be of use again, provided that the pen is capable of accepting that ink or refill. So, let us not be hasty in throwing it away. It may still be of some use.

8.THREE CATEGORIES OF INSAN

This Insan, therefore, has three possibilities:

(a) He is completely useless;

(b) He is neither completely useless nor is he of full use;

(c) He is of full use.

Let us take each category in turn.

(a) That Insan who is completely useless, one who has deviated completely from the purpose for which he has been created, who does not have the capacity within him to fulfil the object for which he has been created, is the gair-Mu'min (non-Muslim).

(b) In the second category is that person who is partially fulfilling his objective, but not fully so. Let him be as yet. He has the potential within him to accept Haq. Therefore, he is not without hope. There is a glimmer of hope, because one sees that, at times, he does accept the Haq and he does practice according to the Haq. There is promise in him. He is to be valued - he has the potential for qabیliat (acceptance). Yet, this much is quite obvious that an object is a failure and is useless in proportion to the degree it fails to achieve the basic objective and purpose for which it has been created.

(c) In this third category is that Insan who steadily, correctly and fully fulfils the purpose for which he has been created. This Insan attains the desired qurb (closeness) and the desired qabیliat, and he has attained firmness and also a great value.

So, Insan has different levels of attainment.

Coming back to Insan's original purpose: We had said that, besides setting aside 6 to 7 hours for sleep regularly, whatever time that Insan has, is solely for ibadat. Whatever he does during the remaining 17 to 18 hours must never be free of ibadat. Whatever work he does, must be done solely with the niyyet (intention) of ibadat.

9.ILM, IBADAT AND QABULIAT

This brings us to the next point: ibadat can never be ibadat until and unless one does not have the 'ilm (Dini knowledge) of performing that ibadat.

It logically follows that the ibadat of gaining 'ilm takes priority over the ibadat of performing deeds and actions. It now becomes incumbent to attain that amount of necessary 'ilm to be able to perform deeds correctly. This acquisition of 'ilm then also becomes ibadat.

How does one acquire this 'ilm? Through study! It is not absolutely necessary to study the prescribed Arabic kitabs. If one does not know Arabic, fair enough. Study authoritative and authentic kitabs in Urdu. This is acceptable. Let us go a step further: If one is unable to acquire 'ilm through the written word (i.e. by

studying kitabs), then acquire the necessary 'ilm through the spoken word. Acquire 'ilm through listening, and by asking questions.

The objective is to acquire correct 'ilm, whether it is through the written word or through the spoken word. Whatever the method adopted, it is obvious that acquiring correct 'ilm takes precedence over ibadate-amali - the ibadat of performing deeds. Any ibadat performed without correct 'ilm, will obviously also be incorrect; and incorrect ibadat is not qabul (accepted). The objective is to perform that ibadat that is qabul (accepted). Qabuliat (acceptance) is dependent on performing one's ibadat correctly, which, in turn, is dependent on correct 'ilm. It follows that ibadat based on incorrect 'ilm will not be qabul. Such ibadat will have no credence. And the purpose for which Insan has been created is ibadat - ibadat that is qabul.

So, 17 to 18 hours of our 24 hours is for the purpose of ibadat. Whatever one does during this time, one should do it with the niyyet (intention) of ibadat. This means that whatever work one has to tackle, one should first say to oneself, "This task that I am about to do, has to be done within the confines of the shariah. What are the shari' laws in respect of this task?"

The tasks may vary. Some have to farm. Others are in employment. Others are in trade and commerce. Others are artisans. Others have to teach, others have to study and so forth. So, the farming that the farmer does, also becomes ibadat. But when? When he farms according to the 'ilm that Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) have passed on. The farmer has to adhere to the laws of Allah Ta'ala:- What type of land is it? Whose land is it? His or somebody else's? If

somebody else's, does he have the owner's permission or is he farming without his permission? Is the owner happy or displeased? Has the land been grabbed and usurped or has the owner given permission without duress? If everything is according to the shariah thus far, the next phase of farming is planting the seeds. How have the seeds been bought? What are the laws of buying and selling? Etc. If this farming is done according to the shariah from beginning to end, then it is Ibadat. The moment the farmer deviates from the shariah, it ceases to be ibadat. The farmer has deviated from the purpose of his creation.

In this way, one should analyse all other tasks which one may be involved in during those 17 to 18 hours. E.g. In trade and commerce: What should one deal in? How should one buy? How should one sell? The necessary 'ilm has to be attained. This business then becomes ibadat if it follows the laws of the shariah. The moment the business deviates from the shariah it ceases to be ibadat. And, seeing that the purpose for which Insan has been created is ibadat, this Insan has deviated from this objective. In outward appearance this person may be said to be an admi (human being) but, in reality, he has ceased to be an admi.

Do you understand the principle?

So, one now knows that all tasks performed in those 17 to 18 hours, if performed according to the laws of Allah Ta'ala, taking care to act according to His wishes and to gain His pleasure, then all these tasks will be ibadat. And if one deviates from His laws, then one will have shifted away from ibadat and away from the

purpose for which one has been created, in proportion to the degree of non-compliance.

Depending on the degree of deviation the individual may then be a complete admi (i.e. a civilised human being) or a deficient one or a very deficient one or not an admi at all (even though he may have the outward appearance of an admi).

10.IBADAT AND SLEEP

What about the 6 to 7 hours set aside for sleep? This period is meant for sleep. Is anybody stopping you from sleeping 6 to 7 hours? On face value the period spent sleeping appears wasted and does not appear to be ibadat. However, this sleep is a means of regaining bodily vigour, of refreshing the body and mind, of bringing cheer and joy into the heart, of attaining tranquillity within oneself, so that the remaining 17 to 18 hours may be utilised for ibadat. This act of sleeping, for the sake of ibadat, is also then ibadat! This sleeping is like gold - very precious and valuable - because it is for the sake of ibadat, which is in itself very precious. In this way, even one's sleep is not free of ibadat.

Do you understand?

11.IBADAT AND MISCONCEPTIONS

We have the misconception that ibadat is the name given to the performance of namaz (prayers) or the keeping of rozas (fasts) or the recitation of tasbihs (a set of zikrs) or of tilawat (recitation)of the Quran sharif only. If a person considers only these to be ibadat, to the exclusion of everything else, he has put himself into a tizzy, into confusion. He is like a fool who has hit himself on the head with a

sledgehammer, so that he becomes dizzy, falls down and becomes concussed. So, when a person has the above misconception, he concentrates only on these few a'mal (deeds), and puts aside all other ibadat. This neglect is such that, in his immaturity, he eventually also leaves off all that ibadat which he had been thinking as the only ibadat one had to perform.

Do you understand, o ye students? Knocking oneself on the head will cause such dizziness that that ibadat which one considered as the only ibadat, also gets omitted. Why? Because one now feels dizzy all the time! How can one perform namaz, because one is now dizzy! How can one keep rozas, because one is now dizzy! How can one recite one's tasbihs, because one is now dizzy! How can one make one's tilawat, because one is now dizzy! Because of performing all those super-obligatory (nafl) namazes, reciting tasbihats and making tilawat all the time, staying up night after night, one has now stopped everything, including those very practices which one had considered were the only acts of ibadat. It has happened!

When this basic ibadat goes, what chance is there that he will be of use in any other ibadat?

12.IBADAT AND HEALTH

His health suffers like that of someone stung by a wasp. He is burning feverishly inside. His limbs have no strength. His mind is weakened. His digestive system is all upset. Similar problems may arise with advancing age, but this is gair- ikhtiyari - one has no choice over the matter. As a person gets older, weakening of the body and mind are unavoidable processes of ageing. On the other hand, deliberately

bringing on these problems on oneself is ikhtiyari. Why have you brought it on yourself? Why have you considered only these practices to be ibadat, so much so that, night after night, you stay awake and continue throughout the day as well? So that, besides nafl namazes, tasbihats, tilawat and fasting, you are doing no other work?

This Insan, this Musalman, has not understood the purpose for which he has been created. He has deviated from the objective for which he has been created. He has considered only these few practices to be ibadat.

Generally speaking, this is the concept of ibadat in everybody's mind. When a person is farming, does anybody refer to him as making ibadat? When a person is in employment does anybody consider him to be making ibadat? Whatever task a person is involved in at any particular time, does anybody consider it to be ibadat? In his mind, only that person involved with namaz, rozas, tasbihats and tilawat is considered to be in ibadat, and anybody doing any other work is not so considered, with the result that those in farming, in employment, etc., will now be looked on with contempt! He will consider himself to be better and superior: "Am I not making so many nafl namazes, staying up night after night? Am I not keeping extra rozas, besides those of Ramadhan?"

13.IBADAT AND ABDIYET

In his own eyes he feels he is good and he looks with contempt at the non- namazi. Not for a moment does he realise that the ibadat that he is performing with this attitude can never be considered to be ibadat.

Why is this so?

The reason is this: ibadat has a shan - a special quality and dignity: Performing continuous ibadat brings within a person the quality of abdiyet - the special quality and effect of abdiyet is that a person develops the quality of ijz (humility and lowliness); and the effect of ijz is this, that one does not look with contempt at others; and if this last point is not present, how can that ibadat be considered to be real ibadat?

Do you understand? Some of you have come from nearby areas, others from far-off places and others still from very far-off places. So, it is important that you understand these concepts.

14.UNDERSTANDING USULS

Try and understand the principles (usىls) underlying one's way of living. The branching categories and ramifications are numerous. To attempt to learn all the details is difficult, so try to catch on to the basic principles. O ye students! Try to comprehend the basic principles and, thereafter, measure all the ramifications of one's entire life against these standards. This task is so much easier.

That is why some Sahaba(R.A.), after coming to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and spending some time with him, at the time of departing for home, used to request from him , "O Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam)! The laws are many. To remember them all fully is going to be very difficult. Can you not show us one or two basics which we may utilise, taking them into consideration and judging ourselves thereby?" Accordingly Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi

wassallam) used to advise them. To some he gave one or two rules; to others three or four; and to others even more, depending on the individual making the request. Bear in mind also that the Arabs were such that they kept faithfully to their promises. This was an outstanding quality to be seen in the Arabs, that they did not go back on their promises.

The following incident illustrates what I have just said: One Sahabi (r.a.), who had stayed a few days with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), was about to depart for home. He came to Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and said: "O Rasulullah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), the laws are many, the branches and off-shoots are many, the a'mal to perform are many. Can you not show me one such item which I can remember on all occasions?" Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) said: "As you wish. Remember the following: Do not tell lies!"

15.TELLING THE TRUTH AND TELLING LIES

This instruction appears in the Hadith sharif as well:

Truthfulness leads to salvation and lies lead to destruction.

This saying encompasses everything.

For example: A person is in business, but he lies to his customers and cheats them. He justifies himself by saying, "It is impossible to do business without a bit of cheating. If one were to tell the truth, my business would not prosper." On the other hand, you will find somebody else who is firm. His attitude is: "Whether I succeed or fail in business is irrelevant. The basis of my existence is ibadat and this business venture is also an ibadat. It is, therefore, compulsory for me to speak the

truth and not tell lies." He, therefore, sticks to the truth. When serving a customer, he explains: "This item is very old. It won't last long, so don't buy it. If you are thinking of using it for a few days only, then, fine. Take it. However, my advice is to buy one of these - this one is faulty, but that one is in perfect order. The faulty one costs so much, the good one costs so much." He speaks the truth, and points out the defects in the items he sells. The customer feels unhappy at such forthrightness and leaves the shop to go buy somewhere else.

This shopkeeper has apparently lost out because of his honesty. At the end of the day he has hardly any sales. The other shopkeepers, on the contrary, are very busy and appear very successful. However, the customers are not fools and are busy assessing their purchases. "What's this! The other shopkeeper told me it would last a lifetime, but here it's broken already. He was obviously lying to me. But, I see my friend has had no problems with his goods. And he buys from that new shop where the owner points out all the faults in his goods. He is not foolish, just truthful. He is not concerned merely with making a sale. He is no cheat, like the others."

The end result is:

Truthfulness leads to success (finally), whereas lies (finally) lead to destruction. After a while the first shopkeeper's business picks up very well and the other shopkeepers find their businesses slowing down.

Another example: Take the situation where an ustad (teacher) is teaching several students. As the students progress in their studies, their understanding also deepens. When full justice is not done to a topic, they will catch on immediately.

"He dealt with the topic very superficially. The ustad has not gone fully in-depth into the subject in the manner he should have. He is pulling the wool over our eyes."

Another example: Take the situation of a person in employment. The worker sees carefully and fully to the work and responsibilities given to him, working with complete honesty and truthfulness. He arrives punctually and leaves only when it is time for him to leave. During his working day, he performs his tasks with full dedication. Such a worker will attract the attention of his superiors and will earn promotion after promotion. This person has worked with honour and dignity and not with deceit:

Do you understand? Many just read the text in the kitabs and do not look at the explanatory footnotes. In this way one will not fully understand the meaning of the text.

16.EFFECT OF SOHBAT

To continue: The Sahabi (r.a.) was told by Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam): "Do not tell lies!" With this parting advice ringing in his ears, the Sahabi (r.a.) left.

Before coming to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), this person had a number of bad habits. However, now being in a state of iman, and being in the presence of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), he has gained the status of a Sahabi, and his internal condition had altered.

This does happen, even nowadays. Just recently I received a letter from a person in Delhi, a V.I.P. over there. He wrote: "Hadhrat, staying with you my condition became so good, so good, that I thought that this state of mine will, insha-Allah Ta'ala, be firmly grounded forever. How to describe it? Every moment I felt a special aura and my namaz was full of khushu' and khudhu'." Concerning gussah (anger/rage), he wrote, "I had already made a vow in my heart - and this I had mentioned to Hadhrat at the time - that I had spat gussah out of my system and, in future, at home and outside I will, insha- Allah Ta'ala , not allow gussah to go beyond bounds."

What he wrote next is also worthy of note:
"However, after only a few days of reaching home I find a decline setting in, a weakness creeping in."

17.BREAKING PROMISES IS BREAKING TENETS AND BREAKING HEARTS.

Coming back to the Sahabi (r.a.): Before spending time with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) he had three bad habits: he used to steal; he used to drink alcohol; and he used to commit zina (fornicate).

Habits die hard. Back in his home environment, the urge to steal arose in him again. He was now greatly upset and in a quandary. "What's happening? I have just spent some time with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), sat with him, listened to him, and now?" He was in deep thought, debating with himself: "This is

very bad! If I were to steal, and presented myself again to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and he were to ask: 'You did not steal, did you?' What then?"

Of course, Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) used to receive Divine revelation (wahi), either wahi matlu' (Quran sharif) or wahi gair-matlu' (Hadith sharif).

"If I had stolen and I were to say 'No, I did not steal', then it would be an outright lie. And Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had told me not to lie. And I had promised him I would not. There I promised one thing and here I turn back on my word! This is being unfaithful. This is breaking a promise, and also breaking a tenet of the Din. If, on the other hand, I were to speak the truth and confess, 'Yes, I did steal,' then it would be letting Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) down and hurting him even more!"

Is my voice reaching you? You are not falling asleep by any chance?

Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) heart would definitely break. He would most definitely be grieved. I would imagine the following train of thoughts going through his mind: "He made the request, thereupon I advised him and now look at his condition. And he even stayed here!" So, breaking that promise is not just breaking one's word, but it is also breaking a tenet of Din and breaking the heart of not just anybody but that heart which is more precious than the hearts of all the kings put together! The Sahabi (r.a.) thought, "What type of Insaniyet is this? What type of admiyet is this? What type of ibadat is this of mine?"

Just now I had mentioned that the Arab was renowned for keeping to his promise. This was a natural trait of his character. Also, the Sahabi (r.a.) had heard the Qur'anic ayet:
O ye Believers! Fulfil your promises. (S.5 A.1)

Allah Ta'ala is well aware of your doings. So, fulfil your promises.

The nett result of these three - the innate temperament to keep a promise, the order of Allah Ta'ala and the instruction of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) - was that the Sahabi (r.a.) told himself, "How can I steal?" His stealing came to an end!

Again I ask: Is my voice reaching you? You are not going to stay with your sheikh all the time! Did not the Sahabi (r.a.) stay with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) for a while and then return home? To sit here is to listen attentively and to create a place in your heart for these talks. This is the concept behind coming here. And, having stayed here in this manner, to return home and live accordingly. Otherwise, it is being unfaithful.

To continue: The Sahabi's (r.a.) stealing came to an end. Then came the hour when he used to drink. Just as we have set times for breakfast, lunch, tea and supper, so he had a set time for his drinking. At the approach of meal- times one looks forward to eating. It does not necessarily mean that one is absolutely famished and craving for food. No. It is just that one is conditioned to eat at a certain time and when the time approaches the urge to eat arises, this being an indication that one is hungry.

So, when the hour approached for the Sahabi (r.a.) to drink, according to his old habit the urge to drink welled up strongly in him. This inclination to drink, this strong desire to drink, upset him and threw him into consternation. Still fresh in his mind was the awareness of having been with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). The internal conflict, the arguments and counter- arguments again raged through him. "How can I follow this urge? If I were to drink and presented myself before Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), and Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) were to ask, 'Did you drink alcohol, or did you not?' what will be my answer? If I deny drinking, it will be a blatant lie. If I were to tell the truth and admit to drinking, with what face would I do it?"
Having done what one has been told not to do, any sensible person will definitely feel ashamed to admit to it openly. What rashness would it be! What defiance!

"Break my promise? Break a tenet of Din? Break the heart of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam)? I will not! I will not drink!" In this way he stopped drinking. His age-old habit was broken.

Then came the time for his third bad habit: in the days of Jahiliyah (Ignorance - i.e the pre-Islamic era), he used to commit zina. The urge to commit zina welled up in him with force. Again the shock, the consternation. Still fresh in his mind was the awareness of having been with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). Again the internal debating. "This is even more shameless than stealing and drinking," he told himself. "After committing this indecent act, if I were to present myself before Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and he were to ask...? If I were to say, 'I did not,' it would be a blatant lie. What did I promise? I will not lie. So, besides

breaking a promise, I will also be breaking a tenet of Din. If, on the other hand, I do not lie and brazenly say, 'Yes, I did,' with what face will I say it? How will I be able to bring these words to my lips? Where will I hide my face? What of the grief to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam)? How can I be so callous as to break his heart? A curse be upon me! It is better for me to die!"

This was the inner turmoil in him. Finally, sense prevailed and he left off zina. In this way he cast off all three evil habits. The basis for this achievement was Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) stating to him just one working principle, coupled with an astute appraisal of his temperament.

Yes, the person has to be of that calibre, that when he says, "Very well," he sticks firmly to his promise. The fact that he himself had made the request in the first place and the instruction he had received was from none other than the august personality of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), grounded the resolve he had made even more firmly. Yes, the calibre of the person should be such that, having stayed with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and listened to him, the capacity to accept Haq should blossom within him to such an extent that even being away from Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) the capacity for acceptance should still remain.

Do you understand?

18.MAS'ALAH OF SULUK

What we are saying is that the principle should enter the mind in the form of 'ilm, and then become ensnared in the heart in such a way that being absent from one's

sheikh is the same as being present. This being so, then you will understand the mas'alah of sulىk that is enunciated. What is that? It is the following:

Have the same consideration for your sheikh, whether present or absent.

This principle has been adequately elucidated above, through the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of my sheikh.

19.MAS'ALAH OF HADHIR-NAZIR

Our aqa'id (beliefs), based on our iman, are that only Allah Ta'ala is Hadhir- Nazir (Omnipresent). As you can see, the sheikh is not considered to be omnipresent. The attitude to the sheikh, as explained in the principle of sulىk just outlined, forms the basis for attaining the reality of the concept of Allah Ta'ala being Hadhir-Nazir. At that stage when one has not as yet developed the desired relationship with one's sheikh, the concept of Allah Ta'ala being Hadhir-Nazir is only at the level of academic conviction ('ilme yaqin). After building a relationship with one's sheikh on the principle that one should have the same consideration for him whether present or absent, this relationship becomes a reflection of the relationship one should have with Allah Ta'ala based on the aqidah of Allah Ta'ala being Hadhir-Nazir.

Did not the Sahabi's (r.a.) thoughts run along these lines: "If I presented myself to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and he were to ask, then?" Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) was absent at that moment, but the concept is there: Being absent, yet it is as if he were present. On every occasion, being absent it was as if he were present. The effect was that all three evil habits were abandoned.

20.COROLLARIES

What has been enunciated is the principle of sulىk. From it, a number of points become apparent.

FIRSTLY: Importance Of Having A Muslih

A Musalman Mu'min should, as far as possible, not be without a sheikh. It is not necessary to become bay't. However, one should sift out and carefully select one such person for one's islah. One should relate to him all one's activities and whatever he advises, one should follow diligently. This Musalman's Islam will progress tranquilly at all times from the viewpoint of ibadat. This means that, besides the 6 to 7 hours set aside for sleep, the rest of his time will progress as ibadat. All his evil activities, all his shameless ways, will fall away one by one and he will move steadily in the direction of ibadat.

When he had stopped drinking alcohol, he had now stepped towards ibadat. Is that not so? In other words, leaving off sin is ibadat! Abandoning alcohol is ibadat, abandoning stealing is ibadat, and abandoning zina is ibadat! When an act is evil, abandoning that act is ibadat! Therefore, a person seeking his islah (self-rectification) has to keep his sheikh - his muslih - informed of his activities. By following his advice he will be progressing along the road of ibadat. The Sahabi (r.a.) had presented himself to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) for his islah. His frame of mind was such that the company of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had a certain effect on him, so that whenever a situation arose where there was an inclination to do wrong, the effect of his stay with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) manifested itself and stopped him from that wrong.

This is the first point: A Musalman Mu'min should designate one person as his muslih (guide and reformer), having selected him with great care and having the correct faith and confidence in him (i'tiqad-o-i'timad). This in itself is an ibadat, because this appointment of a person as one's muslih is a means to another ibadat, the ibadat of leaving bad and evil ways and coming towards goodness.

The objective is muhabbat (love) of Allah Ta'ala. Muhabbat for one's sheikh is an aid and assistance to attain the muhabbat amali (the practical love) of Allah Ta'ala, which is ibadat. Therefore, the former also becomes ibadat. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) has specifically requested from Allah Ta'ala. What is that?
O Allah! Grant me the rizq of Your muhabbat, and (this is my request to You), grant me the rizq of the muhabbat of that person also whose muhabbat for You is an aid and assistance in attaining Your muhabbat.

The muhabbat one has for one's sheikh exceeds the muhabbat one has for everyone else living on earth. This muhabbat is thus a powerful force in attaining the muhabbat of Allah Ta'ala.

You will now come to realise how important and how necessary it is to appoint someone as one's muslih and sheikh, and with what care this should be done.

All this has been established just from one mas'alah (rule) - the Sahabi (r.a.) coming to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and departing with tremendous firmness and strength, which he would not have attained had he not come.

SECONDLY: Milan

The second point that can be established is as follows: After leaving the company

of one's sheikh and returning home where one mixes with friends and relatives, being far away now, a decline sets in and one's previous condition tends to reappear. The internal strength developed in the company of one's sheikh tends to show some weakness. This manifests itself as milan - an inclination towards bad or evil. This was seen in the Sahabi (r.a.) as well. However, his stay with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) was such and his calibre was such that he ignored this milan - the inclination towards evil.

Do you understand?

This milan, this inclination towards evil, this attraction towards haram, this drawing towards what is forbidden, in itself does not fall into the category of being "mamnu'" (forbidden). One is not accountable for this inner inclination. It does happen that one reaches a stage that such urges do not arise at all, but there is no law that says that they will never arise.
It follows that - Allah forbid! - if it happens to a salek, that he is inadvertently drawn to what is haram (forbidden), he should not panic. He should not feel grieved. He should not lose hope. He should never but never consider all his struggles along the path of sulیk, all his mujahadah and riyadhat (striving and spiritual exercises), to be useless.

If the salek has not stayed with a muhaqqiq and has not tried to learn from the lessons expounded, he will be terrified. He will then consider his efforts to have been of no use. He will tell himself, "What have I achieved? Nothing! I am back to

square one." He will be filled with regret. "My whole life has been wasted!" It should not happen - Allah forbid! - that he now starts sinning openly!

However, that salek who has sat with a sheikh, a muhaqqiq, one who discussed different aspects of sulىk, one who enunciated the principles of sulىk, the masa'il (laws) of Tasawwuf, together with an in-depth analysis of the batin, such a salek will understand. Such a salek is not one who sat with head bent down in muraqabah (meditation) in a halqah, (circle/ gathering) merely for the tawajjuh (spritual focus) of the sheikh to fall on him; but the salek I am speaking of is one who listened attentively to the discourses of the sheikh and imbibed the lessons therein. He will immediately understand. He will tell himself, "This is merely an inclination, a milan, an instinctive urge. Such urges will come and go. Why should I pay any attention? Why trouble myself? Pooh! La howla wa la qىwata."

This "Pooh!" that is directed at this milan is said in a tone of utter contempt. He is contemptuous of his own nafs (carnal self), that it should come up with such urges. This "Pooh!" is another way of saying: "Why should I take notice of such despicable urges from my nafs?" This "Pooh!" results in even greater firmness within himself. When this process is adopted every time there is milan and the milan is ignored with a contemptuous "Pooh!", then, insha-Allah Ta'ala, a stage will come when there will be no milan whatsoever - the inclinations will stop!

21.EFFORT AND RESULTS: THE FOCUS OF ONE'S GAZE IS ALLAH TA'ALA

This stage will be attained by the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala, and not through your own

efforts. I repeat: not through your efforts, but through the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala. The moment you consider attainment of this stage to be solely a personal achievement. Allah Ta'ala will put you to the test! "Oh! Is that your attitude? We shall soon put you to trial."

Allahu-akbar! Dear brother! What will happen if the gaze of Allah Ta'ala moves away from a person? Because this person had his gaze fixed at all times and on all occasions on Allah Ta'ala, he in turn earned the special attention of Allah Ta'ala. This was a special favour of Allah Ta'ala being showered on the servant.

If somebody who is small attracts the special attention of an elder, then subhanallah! If this person is indifferent to this favour, then it is a sign of lack of appreciation and is also ingratitude. He should not be surprised if he does not remain in the elder's good books and lands up in his bad books and be put to the test.

Never should one attribute to oneself any good that has resulted from one's efforts. Any inclination towards good, any performance of good deeds, any laudable quality becoming established within oneself, any good attribute becoming second nature, should never but never be considered to be the results of one's own efforts, but one's gaze should be fixed on Haq.

When Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) himself has stated thus, how can his Musalman ummat be excluded? Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) requested from Allah Ta'ala:

O Allah! This endeavour is from me ...

22.JIHAD

The term "jad wa jehd" means: toil and labour / endeavour and effort. From this root word many other words take their form:

Jihad - to fight in the Path of Allah Ta'ala;

Ijtihad -earnest effort/authoritative interpretation.

Mujtahid -juror.

Mujahid -one waging jihad.

The first enemy to make jihad against is one's nafs. A mujahid is, therefore, one who makes jihad against his nafs. The nafs has to be crushed. This is what happens in jihad, that the nafs is trampled to dust.

When waging jihad, the most daring of big foes may be attacking one on the battlefield, one will be able to meet him fearlessly. On condition!

What is this condition? The condition is that one has already been waging a continuous war against a bigger and more daring foe, fighting strenuously, in a masterly and professional manner, bringing this foe into captivity. This foe being none other than one's warring, stubborn and rebellious nafs! Such a mujahid, who holds his nafs in captivity, need fear no foe on the battlefield, no matter how unassailable he may appear.

So, the foe, the enemy to tackle, is one's nafs. Why fear the nafs? Learn how to do battle with the nafs. Learn how to make mujahadah against the nafs in the correct manner, under the watchful eye of an ustad, (teacher) with his guidance, staying with him, with muhabbat for him in your heart. Then only will you achieve something.

As we were saying, Rasuیlullah's (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam)gaze was on Haq Ta'ala all the time. Even after making an effort, Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) pleads with Allah Ta'ala:

O Allah! This effort, this endeavour is from my side. However, my gaze is not on it - my dependence is on You.

That is why I have said: Do not look at your own efforts. Fix your gaze on Allah Ta'ala. If the milan disappears completely, this is the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala. We have mentioned the qissah of the Sahabi (r.a.) who stayed in the company of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and then went back home. The urge to commit sin arose in him, but the awareness of his stay with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) was dominant and the urge to sin was overcome. By the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala, the urge disappeared. Similarly, the effect of staying with one's sheikh is that an awareness of him prevails even in his absence. Thus, when this milan arises, this awareness causes one to ignore the urge.

This milan, this welling up of an urge to sin, is not evil as long as it remains an urge only and does not express itself in deeds. On the contrary, this milan is not a bad thing but is of benefit at that particular time. Take careful note of the words being used!

How so? The reason being that this milan, as long as it remains merely an urge, spurs one on to greater mujahadah - one's mujahadah becomes more powerful. The internal battle proceeds as follows: "Oho! The urge is there again. This is evidence of weakness. This attraction towards wrong and evil, towards what is forbidden

and what is haram, is a sign of weakness. However, not to fear! I have come from such a place of strength, I will ignore all such urges and inclinations."

To repeat: It is not mamnu' for milan to arise - one is not accountable for urges that arise spontaneously within oneself. On the contrary, for some - for the talibe sadiq, for that person sincerely seeking his islah - this milan becomes the basis for becoming more firm and sound in the crushing of the nafs. The talibe sadiq progresses rapidly in sulیk and Tasawwuf to that stage where this milan ceases completely.

To understand this concept better, let us sit back for a while and take the following situation:

That person who has performed Haj - that mu'min who, through the demands of his iman and ihtisab (as is mentioned in Bukhari sharif, "imanan wa ihtisaban") has undertaken the journey to Baitullah to perform Haj as it should be performed - what is his state there? In the sanctity of the Haram sharif, in the awe-inspiring precincts of Baitullah, this mu'min is so overawed that his passions, his desires, are virtually non-existent. He has absolutely no milan. Women not observing purdah move all around him. Right in front of his eyes these women may greet one another, kissing each other's cheeks or foreheads or clutching one another to their bosoms, but this mu'min is in the shadow of Kabah sharif! Despite seeing all this, he has no milan. There is not even a trace of any desires rising in him.

Is my voice reaching you? Listen carefully now: If this is the effect on him of seeing Kabatullah before his very eyes, can you imagine what the effect will be on

him, of having the thought of Allah Ta'ala just as vividly in his heart? If seeing Kabahtullah has extinguished his passions, "seeing" Allah Ta'ala will affect him even more so!
This "seeing" Allah Ta'ala is a state that is attained when the tongue is busy with an abundance of zikr, with ru'ete-muraqabah-ihsan (the contemplation of Allah Ta'ala seeing one) and with the heart being involved with shagl-be-Haq, so that the concept of Allah Ta'ala being Hadhir-Nazir becomes a hal (state). If this is his state, then there is no question of milan troubling him.

So, the salek has been progressing, slowly, slowly, when suddenly the old urges come back. Frightened and panic-stricken he rushes to his sheikh. Soon the fear and panic are gone, for he has now heard from his sheikh that one is not accountable for this milan, as long as these urges do not express themselves in deeds. One is accountable for deeds. He has learnt how to deal with milan. He now scoffs at these urges, saying "Pooh!" in disparaging tones, paying no further attention to them. Using this technique each time and ignoring these urges soon, by the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala - not by his own cleverness - the milan also ceases. His gaze is on Allah Ta'ala.

Just see, even the Sahabi (r.a.) had milan developing in him once he was away from the saintly court and company of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). Thereafter, him being absent was the same as being present. Being far away, yet he was near. Do you understand? Urges arising is not a sign of failure. Ignoring these urges is a sign of success.

These are problems faced by the salek. Some write to me, others inform me verbally, "When I was there with Hadhrat, my state was unique. But, on returning home, I detect a weakness creeping into me." That is why these topics are discussed with you. Who stays all his life with his sheikh? Nobody.

23.'ILM AND KITaBS

Similarly, one may ask: Which student is going to sit all his life in the classroom? No student. Also, no student is going to carry around his kitabs with him all his life. No. The 'ilm that he had been grounded-in during his student days, the depth of that knowledge, the perfection of that knowledge, the mastery over that knowledge, these will remain with him all the time. Not the kitabs. If the capability and proficiency are with him, it is as if the kitabs are with him, even though the kitabs are in the library.

24.IMAM GHAZALI'S (R.A.) EXPERIENCE

That is why the experience of Imam Ghazali (r.a.) is a valuable lesson. Ayuhatullab! Listen carefully!

Having completed his studies, Imam Ghazali (r.a.) was en route back home. On the way the caravan in which he was travelling was waylaid by robbers. Together with his co-travellers, Imam Ghazali (r.a.) was dispossessed of all his goods. Amongst his possessions were the carefully written notes of the lectures delivered by his ustads. These notes were also taken by the robbers. Imam Ghazali (r.a.) sought out the leader of the band of robbers and pleaded with him: "Your men have taken all my possessions except for the clothes I wear. You may keep the extra clothes and

other valuables - I do not lament their loss. However, please ask your men to return the papers they have taken."

The leader of the band of robbers was amazed at this unusual request. This young man was not worried about clothes and valuables, but he was asking for some pieces of paper to be returned!

Very curious, he asked: "What papers are these?"

Imam Ghazali (r.a.) explained: "I am a student returning home after completing my studies. When my ustads used to lecture, I used to make notes. These are those very pages of 'ilm that I am requesting to be returned to me."

The leader of the robbers said, "What you have just said fills me with great sorrow and regret. Young lad! Is your 'ilm on pieces of paper when it should have been in your heart? Papers can get lost. Papers can be destroyed by fire, become parched by the sun, get eaten by moths, become damaged with damp, etc., etc. You are dependent on papers? It fills me with great pity. Your 'ilm should be in your heart! Be that as it may, your papers will be returned."

He summoned one of his men and ordered him, "Give back to this boy his papers." The notes were retrieved and returned to Imam Ghazali (r.a.).

Imam Ghazali (r.a.) was of noble character. He was, moreover, a dedicated student. The words of the gang-leader were like a knife piercing his heart. On reaching home, he lost no time in memorising all his notes!

Do you understand? 'Ilm may be present on paper and in kitabs, but can you carry these around with you? However, if that 'ilm is learnt in a capable way, that it is present in the heart, in perfection and depth, then 'ilm is present though the kitabs are absent.

If later, as an ustad, he has to teach a lesson, the students are then wonder- struck at his capable presentations. "Subhanallah! With what ease has he not laid open the topic! How simple has he not made that complicated subject, with sufficient illustrating examples. Masha'Allah!"

25.TA'LIM OF THE SHEIKH: FROM QAL TO HAL

Coming back to the topic of Allah Ta'ala being Hadhir-Nazir: The ta'lim of abundance of zikr, of muraqabat and of azgal of shagl-be-Haq, are at that level where they become the means and methods of producing in the heart a hal, a state, of this i'tiqad of Allah Ta'ala being Hadhir-Nazir. That is why Maulana Rumi (r.a.) says:]

Leave your talk and become a man of the time - Annihilate yourself [become dust] in front of one who is kamil (perfect/ accomplished)...

Do not misunderstand: Fine, carry on... BUT what I am asking is: When is the Qal (talk) going to become hal (state)? Is Qal going to be merely on your lips, merely words? When is the Qal going to descend from your lips and become Qal in your heart? This Hal should be embedded in the heart. It has to become so grounded that it does not leave the heart, that it does not slip out. This is the meaning of (Hal).

So, such a person, having reached this state through mujahadah, through toil and effort, will not have his gaze turned on himself but will have his gaze fixed on Zate Haq Ta'ala. He does not look at his own endeavours. If he does, then he has failed and the very next thing that happens is that Allah Ta'ala puts him to the test. Allah Ta'ala is aware of the condition of one's heart. He will show one up very quickly.

26.NAZAR-E-BID

A simple walk through the city and its bazars is sufficient to test him:

Where are his eyes straying?

Eyes filled with greed and avarice (hirs and tama') latch onto various displays.

A desire for fame and prestige (jah) now sparkle in his eyes.

His eyes betray the jealousy (hasad) at the grandeur that others possess.

Those eyes of his have given him away, for they conceal nazar-e-bid - eyes with evil intent. This nazar-e-bid includes all of the above. We labour under the misconception that nazar-e-bid means to look lasciviously at some female or handsome young male. No! The term nazar-e-bid includes much more - it includes looking with eyes of greed and avarice, looking with eyes of jealousy, looking with a desire for fame and prestige, as well as looking with lust. The basic evil intent in the eyes is nazar-e-bid. The evil intent may manifest in different ways, only one of which is to look at some female or handsome youth with lust. We have wrongly restricted this term to the last situation, but nazar- e-bid means looking with hirs or tama', with desire for jah, with hasad, or with lust.

So, the belief and conviction of our iman of Allah Ta'ala being Hadhir-Nazir is still only at the level of Qal, at the level of ilme-yaqin, but not at the level of Hal And the objective is to reach the level of Hal. That is why it is said:

These important concepts are being laid before you for your attention.

Remember:

Neither from kitabs, nor from lectures, nor from wealth is the Din brought alive.

Din is brought alive from the attention given by the buzurgs.

This is the reality (haqiqat) of a sheikh, that he expounds the haqa'iq (truths). The mas'alah of suluk that has been brought to your attention is:

Have the same consideration for your sheikh, whether present or absent.

This concept has been stated very well by Maulana Rumi (r.a.).... By the way, do not think that these verses of Maulana Rumi (r.a.) are a substitute for reciting Quran sharif. No. These verses are kalam-mubalagah àmez - using hyperbole to draw one's attention to and emphasise what is in the Quran sharif.

Make an orchard, a garden..Where? - In your heart... From what? - From Nur! Whose? - From Haq: Make an orchard, a garden in your chest of Nur from Haq.

Allah Ta'ala has also referred to Himself metaphorically as Nur (Spiritual Resplendence):

Allah is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth. (S.24; A.35)

Therefore, when Maulana Rumi (r.a.) refers to seeking Haq in one's chest, he is speaking colloquially, for Allah Ta'ala is not confined to space or time. Zate Haq is

everywhere. The same idiom is used by Allah Ta'ala elsewhere in a Hadith-e-Qudsi:

I can never be accommodated at any place, except the heart of a mu'min.

This can only happen if that mu'min utilises the correct procedures for this to happen. Try it. Use the correct methods and then see!

27.IBADAT AND ENJOYING LIFE

Then you can start enjoying life! Then you will find delight in your family, delight in your employment, delight in your eating and drinking. In sleeping there will be delight, in waking there will be delight and in going about your chores there will be delight.

Why? Because in each activity you will discover the delight and pleasure of ibadat! And, the purpose, the objective for which Allah Ta'ala has created us is for His ibadat!

And I have not created the Jinn and Mankind but that they should worship Me. (S.51; A.56)

This is the theme with which we had commenced. So, except for the 6 to 7 hours reserved for sleep, the remaining 17 to 18 hours that Insan has, are fully and completely for the ibadat of Allah Ta'ala.

28.IN CONCLUSION

The theme this morning has been on objectives. It is only appropriate to state that the objective of this talk was to outline the purpose of the creation of Insan - that

Insan has been created for ibadat. When Insan fulfils this objective and fills his 17 to 18 hours with ibadat, the 6 to 7 hours reserved for sleep also become ibadat, because those 6 - 7 hours are to refresh that Insan for ibadat during the remaining 17 - 18 hours. It follows that Insan's whole life, both waking and sleeping, is for ibadat.

Do you understand?

With the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala, and fadhl and karam of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of Hadhratwala, today's talk on "objectives" has been presented to you. May Allah Ta'ala cause, with aqle salim and aqle mustaqim, this concept of the creation of admi, to settle firmly in our hearts; and may He grant us the tawfiq to live our 24 hours in ibadat, which is the purpose of our creation.

29.A LESSON IN SPEAKING

[Hadhratji (r.a.) used to say that a sheikh gives an all-round training. He even teaches one how to speak. Just prior to the above majlis, a visitor had come to meet Hadhratji (r.a.). The last part of this conversation is also recorded on tape and is being reproduced.]

[Addressing those in the majliskhana, Hadhratji (r.a.) said:] This visitor has come to meet me. When he came, I asked: "What is the purpose of coming here?" He replied: "To meet Hadhrat." I asked: "From where have you come?" He replied: "From Bengal." I said: "All the way from Bengal, to meet me? This causes me some astonishment and apprehension, that someone should come all the way from Bengal directly here merely to meet me." However, on further questioning, it turns

out that he came from Bengal to Sulelabad, which is near here, and has decided to come here to meet me also.

From previous experiences I have come to realise that often people come to Thana Bhawan, or some other place nearby and then come here, but on questioning them they reply that they have come from Bombay, etc. One should always speak clearly and completely.

[Turning to the visitor, Hadhratji (r.a.) said:]
You should have said, "I am a resident of Bengal and came to visit a friend in Sulelabad. I had a desire to meet Hadhrat as well, and came here." Very well. It is a happy occasion to meet you as well. I have no objection to meeting visitors.

One may have heard from friends, or others, that such-and-such a person is a buzurg (a pious/ saintly person) and one desires to meet him. Whether he is a buzurg or not, is besides the point, as long as one's thinking (aqidat) is there. One's niyyet (intention) is important. There is a great reward in having a good intention. Allah Ta'ala knows one's niyyet. For every step you take, you get thawab (reward and blessings).
Verily, deeds depend on niyyets. Each individual will be rewarded according to his niyyet.

However, my amazement was at the fact that he should come from Bengal straight here merely to meet me. These comments are made for the lesson contained in them.

[Hadhratji made du'a for the visitor and made the necessary arrangements for his stay there.]

30.WASIYET

[The wasiyet that Hadhratji (r.a.) gave on 17/10/92 has already been published elsewhere. This wasiyet is being reproduced here as it contains advice of immeasurable value.]

[Hadhratji (r.a.) said:] I can hardly muster enough courage to stir my tongue, weakness having sapped my strength to this extent. It is with great difficulty that I speak. Even then, a few points need stating. Listen attentively.

**Take care to perform good deeds with istiqamat, always with good character and good speech. Also, take care to take it upon yourself to perform namaz, keep roza, and perform what is sunnah and mustahab, taking into account your health and ease of performance. In the same way zikr and tilawat should continue, taking into account opportunity and ease of performance.

**Take care to continue in your studying of kitabs. This is very necessary. Hadhratwala's (R.A.) "Shariat and Tariqat" and Imam Ghazali's (r.a.) Arabic "Tabliqh-ad-Din" (the Urdu translation), one should make obligatory on oneself to read. Hadhratwala (R.A.) used to prescribe these kitabs to great, great ulema, with much emphasis.

**Also, Hadhratwala's(R.A.) commentary "Bayan-al-Qur'an" should be studied.

**Avoid all sinful deeds, to the extent of refraining from anything doubtful, as it appears in Bukhari sharif:
What is halal is obvious, and what is haram is also obvious, and between the two is what is doubtful.

**You should be very desirous of attaining the akhlaqe hamidah and you should remove the akhlaqe razilah and develop a sense of distaste for the latter.

**The effect of this would be that you attain husne kalam (good speech) and husne khulq (good character) and that you maintain these states. The meaning of husne kalam is that words should be decent and cultured (polite/affable), spoken with a soft voice. The meaning of husne khulq is that one should have hilm, which, in our language, we call burdabari (tolerance/ forbearance). Whenever somebody says anything against your temperament, something which offends you, make light of it by using husne-kalam, with burdabari, according to the statement of Allah Ta'ala:
And when they hear vanity they withdraw from it (S.28; A.55)

So, whenever you are in such a situation, put it off honourably. Do not sit at such a place, or involve yourself in that activity, which may be the reason for your being slandered, as it appears in the Hadith sharif.
Abstain from places/occasions of slander.

You have not been told to save yourself from slander, but you are to save yourself from such places and such activities which may cause you to be a target of slander.

[After a pause, Hadhratji (r.a.) continued:]
**My guide and mentor, Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat, Mujaddide-Millat,(R.A.), used

to say, "There are two words; one is 'Dhiyan', the other 'Dhun', to take note of. "'Dhiyan' is that, at all times, sitting, standing, walking about, the thought of Allah Ta'ala should be in you. "'Dhun' is that tazkiyah nafs (the purification of the nafs) should at all times be an obsession." These two words are most onerous. Continuously act on them.

**Do not involve yourself in the affairs of others. Keep yourself aloof from the affairs of others. (To intrude into the affairs of others) is contrary to the honour and dignity (shan) of mashikhiyet.

**Abundance of zikr should be recited in such a way that the tongue makes zikr with every breath and the heart is grateful to Allah Ta'ala (shakir) for the tawfiq for zikr and obedience.

**Keep dealings (mu'amalah) and transactions completely correct, clear and clean.

Enough! These are a few words, by way of wasiyet, which I wish to mention. Despite the fact that I do not have enough courage and strength to muster, then too, by the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala, this wasiyet has been made.

[The following morning, after the fajr namaz, Hadhratji (r.a.) repeated:]

**Good deeds should be performed continuously, with istiqamat, with husne-kalam and husne-khulq; with soft, polite words, as Bari Ta'ala has stated:
Tell My bondmen to speak that which is kindlier. (S.17; A.53)

With husne kalam and husne khulq, whenever any incident takes place, contrary to your temperament, offending you, pass it off with husne kalam, with soft words,

with husne khulq. Bari Ta'ala has stated:
The good deed and the evil deed are not alike. Repel the evil deed with one which is better (S.41; A.34)

** Adopt hilm (forbearance) or let it pass in silence. Bari Ta'ala has stated:
And when they hear vanity they withdraw from it (S.28; A.55)

Husne khulq (good character) is a great thing. Huzur Akram(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had asked the Sahaba (R.A.): "Shall I show you that thing that is better than a person making ibadat the whole night and keeping rozas every day, for a full year?"
The Sahaba (R.A.) asked, "O Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), what is that?"
Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) said, "Husne khulq. This is a much greater thing."
Then Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) asked, "Shall I show you something even better than that?"
The Sahaba (R.A.) pondered: "What could be better than that?" They then requested Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) to show them.
Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) said, "To have husne khulq with your wife - to treat her with softness."

This is because one continuously comes across such things contrary to one's temperament from one's wife. In the same way approach your relatives and friends, even your enemy, with husne khulq.

In conclusion: This is sufficient - Be punctual with and be drawn towards good deeds, with husne khulq and husne kalam. And refrain from evil deeds, with feelings of distaste for them. And let your tongue be zakir, and your heart be shakir.

Cleansing of the nafs and rectification of the nafs should be an obsession (dhun); and the dhiyan of Allah Ta'ala: What has been outlined is the whole summary, the essence, of Tasawwuf. This is sufficient. Continually act on it. These are the noble statements of my murshid Hakim-al-Ummat mujaddid-al- millat, Maulana Mohammed Ashraf Ali sahib Thanwi (R.A.)

Chapter No.:

7

1.FOREWORD

Through the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala, and the barkat of our sheikh(r.a.), this seventh booklet is now ready.

It is important always to keep one's perspectives correct. One's sheikh's guidance is absolutely essential in this respect. It is thus appropriate to reproduce some basic points in connection with one's islah, for neglect of these fundamental usuls (principles) may hinder progress.

In a kitab recently published, called "Hayatus-salek", some of Hadhratji's (r.a.) correspondence with those desirous of their islah is published. Right in the

beginning is a request by a qualified alim for Hadhratji (r.a.) to note down the preconditions that are necessary for islah of one's character.

Hadhratji's (r.a.) reply:

Conditions (to be observed by a) talebe islah:

1.Ikhlas right in the beginning, by correcting one's intention (niyet).

2.Taubah. Performance of two rak'ats of taubah. In the first rak'at recite Surah "Qul Ya-ayyuhal-kafirn",
and in the second rak'at "Iza-ja'".

After the salatat-taubah recite one tasbih of istigfar. Thereafter, lift your hands and repent from
the bottom of your heart: make taubah for past sins, with a promise (not to commit sins in the
future).

If you have any namaz and/or rozah that are qadha, take proper care to perform these.

If you have any material rights (of others) to fulfil, see to these, otherwise request to be
forgiven (if unable to see to your obligations financially).

If you have overstepped the limits with anybody, either verbally or physically, then go and ask
to be forgiven.

3.Observe caution in the matter of association with others.

4.Have complete faith and confidence (i'tiqad-o-i'timad). Be punctual and regular

in informing
(your mentor of your state and problems) and in carrying out his instructions
(ittila'-o- ittiba' ka
iltizam).
5.Be conscious of ikhlas (sincerity) and sidq (veracity) in each and every action and when you
are informing your mentor.
6.Unless there is a very great need, observe silence; and make seclusion something to be
loved.
And observe complete avoidance of beardless youths (amarad) and observe great caution with
regard to them: Have a feeling of detestation in having to give them any occasion to be alone with
you and avoid, as far as possible, taking any work from them.

Point four - communicating with one's sheikh - cannot be overemphasised. Progress is dependant on this, yet it is most neglected. It must be emphasised again that these booklets, "For Friends", are not meant to be a substitute for a mentor. Direct communication with a spiritual guide is still essential.

May Allah Ta'ala give us all clarity of understanding, and also the tawfiq to make amal on the teachings of our sheikh (r.a.). Amin.
Dr. Ismaiel Mangera
(This is a translation of a majlis-e-khas held by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammed

Masihullah Khan sahib(R.A.), in Jalalabad, India, on the 29th March 1992, corresponding to the 23rd Ramadhan, 1412)

2.THE NAFS

For the talibe-haq(seeker of the truth) 3 steps have been mentioned as essential:

3.THE FIRST STEP -BASEERAT

mentioned is as follows:

The understanding (fehem) in the talibe-Haq first gets rectified. In that person who is really seeking Truth with complete sincerity, Haq Ta'ala says that the first and most important event to take place is that his understanding becomes clear.

If this does not happen (i.e. he does not develop clear understanding) then, in the true sense of the word, he is not a seeker of Haq. Thus, this clarity of understanding is a sign, a proof, a witness and it stands as evidence.

This clarity of understanding is spoken of in the Qur'an Sharif as "basa'ir" - in other words, "basirat".

Allah Ta'ala states, "This kitab which We have revealed, whoever reads it or listens to it with understanding, with talab (quest) of Haq, seeking Haq, then this person develops basirat." This is then manifested as rectification of understanding or thinking (fehem). This is the first recognisable step.

4.THE SECOND STEP - HIDAYET

With this rectification of his thinking and understanding, progressively and steadily his heart starts to accept and also to act according to the laws of the shariat. He girds himself firmly for this. This stage is termed as "hidayet" (guidance) in the

Qur'an Sharif. A methodology for this hidayet in the context of deeds (a'mal) appears in him. The Qur'an Sharif explains this with the word "hudan", i.e. hidayet.

So, if this person has not attained hidayet - if he has not established within himself the obedience to the Orders of the shariat - then it is obvious that he has not even attained the first step of basirat. This is the sequence: first comes basirat and then comes hidayet

The external (the zahir) is a testimony of what is inside (the batin). It is evident that hidayet - what in the true sense can be termed hidayet - has, as yet, not come into this person.

5.THE THIRD STEP - QURB-O-QABUL

However, if both these - basirat and hidayet - have developed, now the fruits will be seen. The fruits are qurb and qabul (closeness and acceptance). The Qur'an Sharif has termed this stage as "rahmat". So, initially there is basirat, which is followed by hidayet, and then comes rahmat.

This is clear indication for mankind and a guidance and mercy for a folk whose faith is sure. (S.45 A.20)

So, obviously, when clarity of understanding enters and it results in the development of hidayet - when these two priceless gems have been attained - then why should Allah Ta'ala's special rahmat not be focussed on him? Why should Allah Ta'ala's special favours not be directed towards him?

It is Haq Ta'ala who has stated that the fruits, the net result, of attaining the first two stages is rahmat. In other words Haq Ta'ala is saying, "In My eyes, his voice is qabul (accepted), he has qurb (closeness) and, therefore, he is maqbul (accepted)!" What a wonderful thing has not been stated by Zate Bari Ta'ala about that Mu'min whose iman is good: namely, that firstly the understanding of the talibe Haq (seeker of Truth) gets corrected, which is termed attaining basirat; then the heart accepts the ahkam (orders of the shariat) and the talibe Haq walks along these ahkam, which is termed attaining hidayet. Thus far two things have happened: Basirat has appeared and when clarity of understanding comes, ignorance disappears; and, secondly, hidayet has manifested itself and when this happens he walks steadily along the siratul-mustaqim.

Let us pause to ponder. Know yourself! Question yourself! "Has the correct hidayet come into me or not?"

To continue: When basirat has entered, resulting in hidayet appearing, the net result will be that their fruits will appear, namely qurb and qabul, that is, rahmat.

The talibe Haq, the talibe tazkiyah, the talibe islah, when he obviously has ikhlas (sincerity) in him, has compulsorily to appraise himself, to judge himself, to assess himself and to ask himself continuously: "What is the state, the specific quality of my nafs?"

6.THE NAFS

In the Qur'an Sharif Zate Bari Ta'ala has narrated three states of the nafs:

1) The first state is called ammarah-bis-s'. Mention is made of this state in the

Qur'an Sharif, in Surah Yusuf (ayet 53):

2) A second type, a second condition of the nafs, has been mentioned in the twenty-ninth para, in Surah Qiyamah (ayet 2). This is the nafse lowwamah:

3) The third type, the third condition of the nafs, has been mentioned in the thirtieth para, in Surah Fajr (ayet 27). This is the nafse mutma'innah:

These are the three types, the three conditions of the nafs, narrated by Allah Tabarak wa Ta'ala in the Qur'an Sharif:

(1) Nafse ammarah-bis-s', (2) nafse lowwamah, and (3) nafse mutma'innah. Now it is important to know and understand all three states of the nafs.

As we said just now, the talibe Haq develops firstly, clarity of understanding (basirat). With this newfound understanding the talibe Haq should ponder, and say to himself:

"Allah Ta'ala has narrated three states of the nafs in the Qur'ane Pak. Therefore, I should come to know, come to understand and come to recognise which is the type of nafs I possess. Do I possess nafse ammarah, nafse lowwamah or nafse mutma'innah?"

There is now initiated in the talibe Haq a search, an introspection. This process is the natural outcome and demand of the basirat that has developed in him. If this process does not occur then this person is not a talibe Haq (seeker of Haq) in the real meaning of what a seeker of Haq should be. He is not a talibe tazkiyah (one seeking purification) in the real sense of the words. He is not a talibe islah (one seeking self- rectification) in the real sense of the words.

So, that talibe Haq who has clarity of understanding (basirat), which is the first attainment, should ponder and ask himself, "Seeing that Allah Ta'ala has mentioned three states of the nafs, in which category does my nafs fall? As far as Allah Ta'ala is concerned, which nafs is one's objective, to be attained fully and correctly? Then I, as a Mu'min, should strive to attain that same objective that Zate Bari Ta'ala has laid down, as a requirement of my iman."

Brothers, is my voice reaching you?

One has to recognise what has been stated above. And this process of introspection and questioning must continue until one has in one's mind that same gaze that Zate Bari Ta'ala has: His gaze is on the nafse mutma'innah and that is where one's gaze should also be fixed.

7.NAFSE AMMARAH-BIS-SU'

So, the talibe Haq starts taking work from his newfound understanding and he takes stock of himself: "Ofo! My temperament is drawing me towards amusement and play, of which it has been said,
'All amusement and play is haram.'"

How has he analysed himself? How has he come to the conclusion that his tabiyet (temperament) is drawing him to amusement and play? This is his introspective process:
"My tabiyet does not draw me towards good deeds. Never mind being attracted to good deeds, but there is not even the slightest inclination towards good deeds. To the contrary, my tabiyet (temperament) pushes me to bad and evil. It does so to

such an extent that I do not even feel bad or upset within myself at doing bad! Whenever I am involved in anything, one can be sure it is some evil! When it is time to do some good, my tabiyet turns away and inclines towards evil. When it is time for namaz, my tabiyet does not incline towards namaz - my tabiyet draws me to that which is the direct opposite, some or other evil - and I actually do that evil! It is obvious that evil does not upset me and that there is no inclination on my part towards good at the time of having to do some good. So, it is obvious that I have in me nafse ammarah. This is how it is recognised. This is its mode of action. This is how it works!"

Nafse ammarah-bis-s'. There is a qualifying suffix to the word "ammarah" and that is "bis-s'". Why so? The answer is: because the nafse ammarah has the special quality that it is involved in evil - s' means evil - and it does not incline towards good. To this extent that when somebody tries to advise him then, too, good is considered to be evil and evil is considered to be good! This is the degree of disturbed thinking that a person has when he is in this state.

"Ofo!" this talibe Haq tells himself, "Being a Mu'min, yet this is the state of my nafs that I shy away from good and am drawn towards evil? Is this what my iman demands of me, me being a Mu'min?"

These are the symptoms and signs by which the nafse ammarah-bis-s' is recognised and identified. It is actually a recognition of corrupted thinking.

Do you understand the concept?

So, this Mu'min, because of the demand of the iman in him, is now in deep thought. He is busy with introspection, weighing himself, assessing himself, judging himself against the criteria just outlined. This process leads him to a stage where his intelligence and understanding come forward to support him. An apprehension arises within his heart. Warning bells sound. An alarm rings within him!

His newfound understanding (basirat) leads him forward: He comes to sense that certain things are good and certain things are bad; he comes to perceive the difference between beautiful and ugly; he comes to recognise evil as evil and comes to accept good as good.

8.NAFSE- LOWWAMAH

A change is noticed: He is now drawn towards good and he begins to shun what is evil. Now, whenever his tabiyet agitates and incites him into doing something wrong or evil, his basirat (understanding) stops him - scolding him, reproaching him, taunting him, shaming him.

Within himself he is now feeling most reprehensible. Within himself he rebukes himself, "What a shameful thing! What a dishonourable act! What a pitiful creature you are! Your faith and belief, O Mu'min, based on your iman, is that Allah Ta'ala is Hadhir-Nazir, that He is present all the time, and yet you can stoop so low?" Thus he reproaches himself.

Basirat (clear understanding) has come to him and his tabiyet (temperament) now progresses towards hidayet. He now inclines towards good and he now begins to

distance himself from evil. He is proceeding along the road of hidayet. Ammariyet of the nafs is departing and lowwamiyet is entering.

The process continues. The basirat of this Mu'min increases. More and more, his inclination is towards good. Involvement in evil causes his tabiyet to reproach himself more and more severely. He is all the time preoccupied with this thought: What nafs is the nafs that is the objective as far as Zate Bari Ta'ala is concerned? He is in deep thought. Which is the nafs that is desired by Allah Ta'ala?

This is the demand of the basirat that he has attained, when it is accompanied by hidayet, with the faith and belief of Allah Ta'ala being Hadhir-Nazir, with taqwa (fear and awe of Allah Ta'ala) entering the heart and a sense of shame establishing itself. "It must not happen that from my lips should come forth words of evil that, despite my heart harbouring an intention to do good, some evil is manifested by me!"

This is the state of his heart. However, if this state has not arisen yet, then evil words will issue from his lips and any intention in his heart to do good will be substituted with evil. These are obvious indications that he is still on the verge of taqwa - taqwa has not entered as yet. Otherwise the tongue would have been restrained and the heart would have been redirected.

Let us go further:

The deeds the person is doing are good deeds. However, the cheerfulness that should have been present in his tabiyet is just not there. The openness that should have been present in his disposition is just not there. Doing good is still

burdensome and there is still some rancour in him. There is still being emitted the smell of shirk (polytheism)!

Have you heard my words?

9.THE SMELL OF SHIRK

To repeat: There is still the smell of shirk being emitted! It must not happen that this smell of shirk should spread and, on his side, this person is completely unconcerned!

It shows that the concept of Zate Bari Ta'ala being Hadhir-Nazir, with the due honour and respect that this demands, has not been established. Otherwise he would definitely have experienced some dread and he would have stopped his tongue and his heart from evil. As yet his carefreeness has not been curtailed - his tabiyet is still rampant.

Listen carefully to this incident related by Hadhratwala (Hadhrat Thanwi(R.A.) and ponder over it.

There was a certain molvisahib staying in Makkah mu'azzamah. He fell ill and passed away and was buried in Jannatul Mala, the qabrastan (cemetery) of Makkah mu'azzamah.

Those going for Haj usually go to several places for ziyarat and one such place being Jannatul Mala as well, where the hajis (pilgrims) recite fatihah at the graves. Nowadays there are certain restrictions but in those days there was full permission to visit by day or night.

One such group of hajis, proceeding in this way, stopped at a certain grave to recite

fatihah, when the thin top-covering of the grave suddenly caved in, revealing the body lying inside.

Looking into the grave, what did the people see? To their utter amazement lying inside they saw the body of what appeared to be a young Christian lady! What is this? No non-Muslims are even allowed into Makkah mu'azzamah. For them to stay there is forbidden. They had never heard of such a thing! So, how could a Christian girl come to be buried here?

In this group of hajis was present also a certain molvisahib who was looking intently at the corpse. He recognised her. "This girl is from France!" he exclaimed in astonishment.

Is my voice reaching you, brothers?

So, learn a lesson, O ye who have eyes!

The molvisahib continued, "This girl is from France and I used to teach her the Din. She had secretly become a Muslim. She passed away in my presence and she was subsequently buried there in France. How did she come to be here?"

On hearing this some of the onlookers spoke up. "But a certain local molvisahib was buried in this grave. And you are telling us that this girl passed away in France and that she was buried there! And her body now lies transposed here! It seems reasonable to suppose, then, that the molvisahib's body has been transposed from here to France! This matter requires further investigation."

The group proceeded to the house of the deceased molvisahib. One person went ahead and knocked on the door. The widow came to answer the knock. He asked of

her, "Your husband, the late molvisahib, can you tell us about him?"

She replied, "He was a very good man, masha'Allah! He kept a beard and he was regular with his namaz and rozahs."

The spokesman enquired further, "You did not take note of any...er...anything unusual? Just think a bit!"

The widow appeared perturbed, "But why are you asking?"

The spokesman tried to reassure her, "Nothing really. But just try and think a bit."

The poor widow complied and started thinking deeply. After some thought she spoke. (Listen very carefully now!) She said, "One thing comes to mind. When in need of ghusl after janabat, my husband definitely used to bath [a bath after marital intercourse, as required by the shariat]. Yes, he definitely did perform this nék amal (good deed). However, at the same time he used to comment that if Islam did not have this order to make ghusl after janabat, it would have been a very good thing."

10.IBADAT AND TAQWA

Are you listening? Making ghusl after janabat is a nék amal - a good deed which merits thawab (reward). However, in his heart he harboured disapproval! His deed is one of ibadat (an act of worship), but without taqwa! Ponder over this! Like beauty and the beast - the beauty being the nék amal of making ghusl; the beast, the ugliness, was that which he harboured in his heart, the opinion that it would have been much better if Islam did not have this command to make ghusl after janabat. And what he kept in his heart issued forth from his lips!

The widow continued, "I kept on telling him, 'Please don't utter such words!' But he never listened!"

The concept had become ingrained. His nafs was set towards ammariyet - ammarah-bis-s'. This sentence that came into his heart and issued from his lips, is it su;' (evil) or is it khair (good)? Obviously it is su' (evil)! He was not repentant - he did not make taubah. When he passed away, he was buried in the local qabrastan in the very precincts of Makkah mu'azzamah. On the other hand there was this Christian girl, who (as her ustad [teacher] had reported) had secretly brought iman, hiding it from her parents, and who had been buried in France when she passed away there. Allah Bari Ta'ala took her body from the Darul-Kufr of France and transposed it to the ground of Makkah mu'azzamah in whose surroundings are saleh (pious) people. And the molvisahib who was buried in the ground of Makkah mu'azzamah, was despatched to France. (This was later confirmed).

Is there not a lesson to be learnt from this incident? Is it not something to ponder over? Do you now recognise what is basirat? Do you understand what is clear understanding? Do you understand what it is to be a talibe Haq and also its opposite? - Because the first thing to happen to a talibe Haq is that his understanding becomes clear, he develops basirat. Whereas here there was no basirat. And who was he? A molvisahib! Despite doing a deed that was nék, inside him lurked the evil of shirk! The deed was performed, but with (evil).

Hadhratwala(r.a.) related several illustrative incidents. Here follows another. (The incident related previously was an eyewitness account. The incident to be related now is in relation to a metaphysical occurrence in a dream.)

11.IMITATION OF OTHERS

A molvisahib, punctual with his namaz and rozahs, passed away. A pious person saw him in a dream suffering the punishment of Jahannam in the alime Barzakh (world of departed souls). Quite astonished to see the molvisahib there, he exclaimed, "You? You are in Jahannam? What brought this on?" The molvisahib explained, "It happened as follows: It was the day of Holi..." (This is the Festival of Colours celebrated by the Hindus. On this day the Ahle Hanud and the mushrikin throw colouring on one another.)

"It was the day of Holi. I had just had a meal and I was chewing some pan(betel-leaf). I left home to go somewhere. While walking along I came across a donkey. I addressed the donkey, 'Poor animal! Has nobody thrown any colouring on you? Come, let me colour you!' So saying, I spat some pan-stained spittle on him, the red spittle making a vivid red splash on his coat.

"After my death, when my turn came to stand in front of Allah Ta'ala (i.e. kachi-péshi - the pre-trial), Haq Ta'ala said, 'Because you had imitated an action of the mushrikin, therefore your abode is Jahannam!'"

Are you listening? You know the Hadith Sharif:

Whosoever imitates a nation will be amongst them.

You also know that the statements of Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) are, in actual fact, Kalame Ilahi - the statements of Allah Ta'ala. The Qur'an Sharif states:
Nor doth he speak of (his own) desire. It is naught save an inspiration that is inspired. (S.53 A.3-4)

Further, Haq Ta'ala Himself states in the Qur'an Sharif:
Allah Ta'ala is saying, "O Mu'mins! Do not let your hearts incline towards the zalims (oppressors). The zalims are the mushrikin and the kuffar, who are showering zulm (oppression) on themselves. Do not let your lifestyles be an imitation of their lifestyles..." The word "yarkanu", in its grammatical application, implies all this. "...lest the flames of Jahannam should reach you also. The mushrikin and the kuffar will be in the fire of Jahannam - this fire has been prepared specifically for them. Though you may not be punished as they are, nevertheless, is it to be taken lightly that the fire may reach you and, at that, the fire of Jahannam? What a severe situation to be in! Let is not be so!"

Ponder over this and adjust your lives, O Mu'mins! Restrain yourselves from ammariyet!

When he had acted thus, having spat his pan-stained spittle on the donkey, then he too had no awareness of the gravity of his action, of what is good and what is bad, of néki (goodness) and evil. There was no self-reproach. Lowwamiyet had not entered into him. Otherwise, there would have been taubah. His life then would

have been of taqwa. However, when he passed away he left with ammariyet-bis-s' and it was on this basis that he had earned for himself the Fire.

In different places in the Qur'an Sharif Haq Ta'ala sounds alarm bells. In connection with Jannat (Paradise) Allah Ta'ala says:
(Jannat), prepared for those who ward off (evil).

Jannat has been prepared for those Mu'mins who have taqwa. It has not been prepared for the kuffar - for them has been prepared the Fire.
So, take a lesson, O ye who have eyes!

How much is Allah Ta'ala not desirous of the Mu'min! How much rahmat (mercy) is Allah Ta'ala not favouring him with! Yes, the Mu'min is being made aware: Come out of ammariyet. Enter into lowwamiyet. Adopt this transitional phase to whatever degree.

If Haq Ta'ala did not approve of this phase, why did Haq Ta'ala then take qasm (an oath) on it?

Has Allah Ta'ala not taken a qasm here? Obviously He has! Also, is a qasm taken on something disliked? Again, obviously not! Lowwamah is a desirous stage and approval is proportionate to the progress in it. Whereas ammariyet is completely and absolutely disliked by Zate Bari Ta'ala the phase of lowwamiyet is liked, yet it is also disliked because it is still a transitional phase.

Imagine, the heart of a Mu'min and lowwamiyet should not enter it? That he should commit some bad deed and not feel horrible within himself? That he should do

some good and not feel pleased within himself? Unbelievable! These are simple ways of recognising lowwamiyet - bad deeds make his heart unhappy and good acts make his heart happy.

The standards of one's existence are being presented before you, O ye Mu'mins! You have to continuously judge yourselves against these standards. You have to keep on measuring yourselves against these criteria. Remember that the understanding of a talibe Haq demands that he be "hushyar" (alert/sensible/wise).

So, that person whose nafs has entered into lowwamiyet now inclines towards goodness and piety. When he does any good his heart feels happy. He avoids what is bad and evil. And, should he do anything bad or evil, his heart feels shattered. He then scolds himself, he reproaches himself. This is because he now has an understanding of what is beautiful and what is ugly. The differentiation between good and evil has now set firmly into his heart.

He continues unrelentingly with this process of self-reproach until a stage is reached where the battle is won and bad and evil is overcome and goodness stands out victorious. There is now an ever-increasing attraction towards goodness and piety and, by the same token, bad and evil are ever-increasingly hateful. Goodness and piety are now close associates, whereas bad and evil are distanced away.

This process continues until there is such a firm association with goodness and piety that it results in a tremendous attraction for these and a tremendous passion for them. On the other hand, his heart has a proportionately deepening distaste for bad and evil and a correspondingly deepening disgust.

To understand this, try to think of a person who is completely famished, almost starving, how is he not attracted towards food! This person's desire for goodness and piety is like that. His disgust for bad and evil is such as any cultured and sensitive person has an aversion to even the mention of the word "faeces" - even the mention of unbecoming words produces a revulsion in him.

His condition now is like that described in the Noble Words of the Qur'ane Pak, where Haq Ta'ala states:
(O ye who believe)Ill is the name of sin after iman! (S.49 A.11)

As if to say, "O Mu'min! Never mind sinning - that should be very far- fetched - after iman even the mention of sin should not come to your lips! This is the degree of revulsion that you should have."

12.REFINEMENT AND CULTURE

The refinement that is supposed to come in his iman has not come as yet. He is not cultured as yet.

For example: When answering the call of nature he should say, "I am going to the baitul-khala (toilet)." He should not blurt out, "I am going to defaecate!" Even the unsophisticated peasant has enough politeness to say, "I am taking a walk into the field," which is his way of saying that he is going to answer the call of nature.

But now refinement has come into his iman. The correct concern has been created. He is now particular and selective in his speech, taking note of the finer points and of the subtleties. Now, even to bring a word to his lips denoting sin is also repulsive.

Do you understand?

Haq Ta'ala is telling the Mu'min that, after bringing iman, even to take the name of sin is also disapproved, it is also an abomination. So, this person, by reproaching his nafs again and again, again and again, has reached a stage where he has a tremendous attraction and passion for ibadat and for doing good. And when unable to do these, he has developed the highest degree of sabr (patience) and tahammul (forbearance). Bad and evil deeds which are connected to the nafs, have left him; and good deeds and good character which are connected to the qalb (heart), have appeared.

As far as his ibadat are concerned, he makes a full effort - this is now ingrained in his tabiyet (temperament). His ibadat now glitter with the noble and dignified qualities of hilm and tahammul (forbearance), of sabr (patience and perseverance) and riyadhat (spiritual exertion).

Look: if one who is famished has some roti in front of him and you try to snatch that roti away from him, will he allow you to do so? Similarly, that person who has a passion for ibadat, at the time of ibadat if anybody tries to take him away, will he allow him? And if somebody tries to drag him to some bad or evil, will he meekly go?

13.COMPANY AND FRIENDSHIP

No, he will not allow either. By repeatedly reproaching himself he has reached the stage where he now reproaches others for enticing him to bad and evil. But he reproaches the other person not with a holier-than- thou attitude, not with

contempt, but out of affection. Out of a sense of duty he tells him, "What an amazing type of incitement, when it should actually be considered disgustful. And you are trying to divert me from my ibadat, when you should have been encouraging me towards it. Should I leave my ibadat and do what is contrary? This is not friendship on your part but enmity!"

Rasulullah (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) has said:
O Allah! Grant me the rizq of Your muhabbat, with depth; and grant me also the rizq of that person's muhabbat whose muhabbat will be an aid and assistance in attaining Your muhabbat.

It is also apparent from this that the muhabbat (love and affection) of that person whose muhabbat is an obstacle in attaining the muhabbat of Allah Ta'ala, is forbidden - it is haram!

Think for a moment of the status that Rasulullah (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) had attained in his ibadat of Allah Ta'ala and his obedience to Allah Ta'ala. Is there any comparison? Even then Rasulullah (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) is requesting for sohbate-salihin - the company of the pious - through whose company he would be aided in his muhabbat for Allah Ta'ala and thereby his muhabbat also be increased.

I ask again: Is there anybody who has greater love for Allah Ta'ala than Rasulullah (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam)?

We have been given a lesson in this, O Mu'mins! Namely that, if we are attracted to company, it should be the type of company requested by Rasulullah (sallallaahu

alaiyhi wassallam). Otherwise that company that is an obstacle in the love of Allah Ta'ala, one that produces a dislike instead of an attraction, that company one should consider repulsive. This is the deeper inference of Raslullah's (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) statement.

One should address oneself as follows: "If this is what Rasulullah (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) has said, then a person like myself should be even more cautious about such company which lessens my muhabbat for Allah Ta'ala. How do I know what affect it will have on me? Enticed by enjoyment, it should not happen that my nafs slides down to the level of ammarah-bis-s'!"

So, that person who steadily reproaches himself and continues steadily to walk along the path of ibadat and obedience (ta'at), reaches a stage where he develops such a disgust for sins as any decent person has for filth (najasat). He now also has such an attachment for shagl, tahammul, riyadhat and ibadat that even if occasionally and involitionally - on a gair-ikhtiyari basis - he misses out on some ibadat or ta'at he feels shattered with grief. Even then he reproaches himself.

Not to mention obedience in matters which are fardh and wajib (compulsory), his passion for nafl (eg. tahajjud) is such, that even if his eyes did not open on a gair-ikhtiyari basis (involitionally) and he were to miss his tahajjud, he feels grieved. And he now takes on compensatory measures to correct this gair-ikhtiyari omission.

14.NAFSE MUTMA'INNAH

So, with ibadat and ta'at, the qualities of tahammul and sabr and riyadhat have so

become part of his tabiyet (temperament) and he has developed such repulsion for bad and evil and makruhat (disapproved acts), that he has now entered the phase of nafse mutma'innah.

These are then the signs whereby this phase of nafse mutma'innah is recognised: he has developed such a forceful attraction and passion for ibadat and ta'at that the qualities of tahammul and sabr and riyadhat are part of his nature, part of his tabiyet, and good character is part and parcel of him.

His passion knows no bounds and he ardently cherishes this desire that, "My tongue remains continuously fresh with the zikr of Allah Ta'ala." Ibadat at its proper time is firmly established. Staying away from sin is now natural. Yet the ardent desire is, "My tongue should also be continuously busy taking the Name of Allah Ta'ala, that my tongue should be continuously fresh with the zikr of Allah Ta'ala! If I have occasion to say something, then too only words of goodness should issue from my lips and no bad or evil words should be uttered." Of course, bad or evil acts are even more remote.

15.ZIKR AND YAD

Words of goodness are what Allah Ta'ala wants from us, for it has been narrated:

(Hadith Sharif)

O Mu'mins! When you have brought iman on Allah Ta'ala, and you have brought iman on the Day of Qiyamah - on being resurrected and having to give account for your deeds - then, when you speak, say what is good, otherwise remain silent.

So, remaining silent is also ibadat. And speaking words of goodness (kalame-khair) is also zikrullah, because these words are spoken in obedience to Allah Ta'ala's orders, and this Mu'min is stopping himself from speaking what is bad and he is restraining himself from speaking evil.

The iman within this Mu'min demands that he has the faith and belief (aqidah) of Allah Ta'ala being Hadhir-Nazir (Omnipresent), so he tells himself, "The thought of Allah Ta'ala must become firmly embedded in my heart, seated immovably, so that there should be no moment, no second, that the thought of Him should leave my heart." Except at unavoidable times.

It may happen that, when involved in some necessary work, some diminution appears, but His thought is still there; and the moment he is free from the concentration of that necessary work, the same forceful remembrance (yad) is back. The tongue is fresh with the zikr of Allah Ta'ala and the heart is joyous in His remembrance (yad).

This nafs is the nafse mutma'innah. And Zate Bari Ta'ala desires that this nafse mutma'innah is one's objective (matlub).

Thus, the talibe Haq, one with the correct concern, has steadily progressed, stage by stage. Swerving away from ammariyet, he had arrived at lowwamiyet. Here his concern had increased. His self- reproach, his pondering and his introspection had not abated and in this way he had traversed lowwamiyet until mutma'innah (tamaniyet - tranquillity) entered his nafs. And this is the stage that is desired (matlub) as far as Allah Ta'ala is concerned.

With the fadhl and karam of Allah Ta'ala, and the barkat of your presence and the quest within you, Allah Ta'ala is causing me to speak. Allah Ta'ala is well aware of that person who is a talibe Haq and of what calibre that talib is. The murabbi-Haqiqi is He. This is the intermediary means.

Take note: Humbleness (niazmandi) should be maintained, pride (naz) should not enter.

You should now know the features that allow one to identify nafse ammarah, nafse lowwamah, and nafse mutma'innah. You should also know that as far as Allah Ta'ala is concerned, nafse mutma'innah is the objective (matlub), so that nafse mutma'innah also becomes matlub for the Mu'min. What has Allah Ta'ala kept in store for such a nafs?

Before coming to that, Allah Ta'ala addresses the kuffar, warning them of a horrendous punishment awaiting them:

None punisheth as He will punish on that day! None bindeth as He then will bind. (S.89 A.25-26)
Such a severe punishment will be meted out to them that there will be no respite from it. They will be bound so severely in such a way as no one else can bind.

Having mentioned this state of the kuffar, Allah Ta'ala goes on to address the nafse mutma'innah:

O that Ruh that has attained itminan (tranquillity)...

Just ponder: Cleansing steadily, cleansing steadily, the nafs has been purified and all nafsaniyet has been removed and ruhaniyet has appeared. This ruhaniyet has been termed nafse mutma'innah.

...return to your Rabb happily, with tranquillity (itminan). (S.89 A.27- 28)

So much so that there is not even an atom's disturbance of that tranquillity (tamaniyet) that exists in your heart. From your side you have shown a desire for Haq, but the tarbiyet has been done by Me.

The term used here is "Rabb" - denoting "One Who fosters and cherishes." The term "Ilah" - denoting "the Deity, One to be worshipped" - is not used. The connotations of the two words, referring to Allah Ta'ala, are different.

Yes, you had expressed a desire for Haq, then you had attained clarity of understanding (basirat), which had the effect of bringing about guidance (hidayet) and which, in turn, resulted in closeness and acceptance (qurb- o-qabul), that is, showering of blessings (inayate rahmat). So, now you are witnessing the manifestation of that rahmat: O Ruhe mutma'innah! Return to your Rabb happily!

There is also a lesson contained in this address: Even though you have reached this goal of nafse mutma'innah, your gaze is not on yourself! If the object of your gaze is yourself - if you feel that you have personally, independently and exclusively reached this stage - then your gaze is still on the creation (i.e. yourself) and not on the Creator, not on Haq!

Depending on the occasion, Zate Bari Ta'ala mentions to us that Attribute (Sifat) of His which is appropriate at the time: O Ruh which has attained itminan, return to your Rabb happily!

[Here Hadhratji (r.a.) paused for a few moments, and then continued.]

16.ZIKR AND TRANQUILLITY

With the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala, my thoughts are racing. In which direction? As follows:

The essence! The sum total of that Ruh filled with itminan (as has been outlined to you), Allah Ta'ala has summarised its quality in the Kalame Pak:

Those who Believe and whose hearts have tranquillity in the remembrance of Allah. (S.13 A.28)

Haq Ta'ala is virtually saying, "O Mu'min! Are you desirous of tranquillity? Then let the zikr of Allah Ta'ala become your food and drink!" This is speaking in lay terms, idiomatically. Make the zikr of Allah Ta'ala your food and drink! Make it your garment! Wear it all the time! Eat and drink it all the time! Let it be your ruhani food! Let it be the clothes of your iman - let it be taqwa!

Clothes of taqwa - these are the best! (S.7 A.26)

In actual fact, Zate Bari Ta'ala has stated that the whole Qur'ane Pak is zikr:

Lo! We, even We, reveal the Reminder, and lo! We verily are its Guardian. (S.15 A.9)

Look. The whole Qur'ane Pak has been referred to as Zikr. Zikr has different forms. In other words, all collective ibadat, all collective riyadhat, all collective

aversion to sin, all of these form categories of zikr. Zikr with the tongue (zikr lisani) is not sufficient by itself until the effect of that zikr does not produce the state of drawing one to ibadat enthusiastically and a state of repelling one from sins with disgust. Otherwise, verbal zikr by itself cannot be relied on.

The Qur'ane Pak has been described as a Zikr. Its words should be recited in the correct manner, vocalising the sounds of the words properly. Secondly, it should be recited with proper understanding of its meaning and, thirdly, it should be recited with the aim of acting on all the laws contained in the Qur'ane Pak.

Haq Ta'ala has addressed a specific group - those who are Mu'min: Those who are Mu'min, what should their state be? Their hearts attain tranquillity by the zikr of Allah Ta'ala; their hearts are blessed with serenity!
Does not every individual desire serenity and tranquillity? Nobody desires upsets and disquietude. So, the correct means have to be utilised. Haq Ta'ala has stated: O Mu'min! The correct means for attaining serenity of the heart is My zikr. I am saying and thereby addressing the Mu'min,
-- - Hearken! Open your ears and listen!

The "Ala" denotes that a warning is being sounded: listen with open ears to what is coming next!
It is only with the zikr of Allah Ta'ala that your hearts will attain tranquillity and serenity.

"That is why I am now saying," so Haq Ta'ala is conveying to us, "O Ruh that has gained tranquillity (itminan), return to your Rabb happily, pleased and joyful!"

17.RETURN TO OUR ORIGIN

"Irji'i" - Return. Go back to that place from whence you came. You had initially been sent from Jannat, so now you are being sent back there. Whereas that person whose Ruh is not in this state his destination will be elsewhere.

This Mu'min is bewildered. "But why this munificence? My Rabb! You are saying, 'Return happily from whence you came'. But why?"
You are pleased with your Rabb, and He is pleased with you!
Wait! That is not all. Wait for another great ne'mat (blessing):

There are some very special saleh bondsmen of Mine, join them!
This is also a very special blessing, otherwise why was it necessary to mention it specifically? "Enter this mansion, this palace, set in surroundings of verdant orchards, the magnificence of which you have never seen with your eyes and of which could never even have crossed your mind! These have been created by Me. My orchard! My Jannat! In it are all those provisions that make up complete and perfect comfort and luxury, absolute peace, tranquillity and serenity. When you cannot even imagine such a place, where could you have ever seen such a place? Enter now into such a garden and orchard, which is Jannat!"

To whom is this munificence being shown? The nafs with tranquillity, nafse mutma'innah. The previous nafs has ceased to exist. Its opposition has been rooted out. And if, perchance, some fault shows, then immediately there is a turning towards Allah (ruj' ilallah) and penitence (inabat ilallah). This, in turn, produces tranquillity of the heart and progressive tranquillity of the Ruh - both inabat ilallah

and itminane Ruh progressing hand-in-hand. Inabat ilallah (turning in penitence towards Allah Ta'ala) is an act most liked by Him.

18.SON OF HADHRAT ADAM (A.S.)

Do you now understand and recognise what is tranquillity of the heart (tamaniyate qalb)? If perchance, incidentally, a contrarary action has taken place, then immediately the heart turns towards Allah Ta'ala. This person is remorseful. He feels terribly ashamed. Even if his eyes shed no tears, his heart is weeping. There is no Shaitaniyet in him that he does not turn to Allah Ta'ala. Shaitan did not turn in penitence towards Allah Ta'ala. No! He is the son of adam (A.S). He is human. Hadhrat adam (A.S.), as well, being human also disobeyed Allah Ta'ala - not deliberately, mind you, but in a state of forgetfulness. Impulsively, incidentally, not with deliberate aforethought, he displayed disobedience to the order given to him. However, when the realisation of his action struck him, he immediately became remorseful. He felt ashamed. He started reproaching himself.

Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If Thou forgive us not, and have not mercy on us, surely we are of the lost. (S.7 A.23)

Allah Ta'ala loved every word of his! And Allah Ta'ala loved him even more because of this. Haq Ta'ala said, "I have elevated his status even more!"

Do you see what ruj' ilallah, inabat ilallah does? Allah Ta'ala is saying, "How good is not my bondsman, that he has not seen me, yet he is penitent and he is turning towards Me!"

And strive to please thy Lord. (S.94 A.8)

He is making "rugbat" towards Zate Bari Ta'ala: He is undertaking burdensome tasks, making an effort, with mujahadah and riyadhat, to get nearer to Allah Ta'ala. The ayet before it is:
So, when thou art relieved, still toil, (S.94 A.7)

Rasulullah (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) is being addressed:
"O Nabi! O Rasul! When you have freed yourself from your day's work of calling people towards hidayet then, in the last part of the night, for your own self take on the task, make the effort, of ibadat."

Although Rasulullah (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) is being addressed, this is directed to all the Mu'minin generally and specifically to the Na'ibane Rasul (the deputies of Rasulullah (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam). When you have freed yourself from your teaching duties, studying and giving lessons then, for your own self too, take on the task, make the effort of ibadat, depending on the free time available to you. Just think how much trouble did Rasulullah (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) not take!

This address to Rasulullah (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) is actually an address directed to the Muslim ummat and specifically to the Ahle 'Ilm (scholars), who can be said to be the Na'ibane Rasul: That, for your own self too, take on the task, make the effort of ibadat in the last part of the night, turn in penitence (inabat) towards Allah Ta'ala.

Nafse mutma'innah - the goal. So, now you should have come to know the different types of nafs and the features by which they may be recognised and

differentiated. You should also have come to know that the nafs which is one's objective as far as Allah Ta'ala is concerned, is the nafse mutma'innah.

It is to gain this objective that one makes an effort, that one tries very hard, that (for some) explanations are necessary. It is to gain this objective that one has to make mujahadah - mujahadah against the nafs to terminate its opposition and gain victory over it.

This has been placed before you through the fadhl of Zate Bari Ta'ala, the barkat of my sheikh and your talab. This is karame Rabbani.

May Allah Ta'ala, through His fadhl and karam, bless us with the tawfiq arzani to make our nafs into nafse mutma'innah.

19.A LETTER

[A booklet with the title of "Maktbat Thalathah" has included in it a letter Hadhratji (r.a.) wrote to one of his khadims some thirty years ago on the same subject of the nafs. The translated letter is being reproduced as it very appropriately summarises the subject in a very unique way.]

My mukhlis muhib min aziz mukarram bandah,

May Allah Ta'ala's blessings be on you!

Dear friend! It must be quite apparent to you that for a salek (one who is travelling along the path towards self-rectification), for the devotee (sahibe iradat), it is absolutely necessary to come to know the states of the nafs and to be acquainted with - and also to recognise - the identifying features, so that one may keep one's watchful eye on it and thereby have its supervision made easy. It should not

happen that one is negligent (Allah Ta'ala forbid!) and one succumbs to, and becomes dominated by, the nafs.

My dear friend! The nafs is only one, but it has three states:

1) Nafse ammarah

2) Nafse lowwamah

3) Nafse mutma'innah

The original, basic disposition of the nafs is that of ammarah. It then progresses to lowwamah and then to mutma'innah.

NAFSE AMMARAH

The nafse ammarah is called ammarah (wayward/ imperious) because it orders one to do bad and evil. This malicious and filthy habit is so ingrained that it is prepared to sell the akhirat (the Hereafter) in exchange for some measly, insignificant worldly desire or passion.

QUALITIES AND SPECIAL FEATURES OF NAFSE AMMARAH

The nafse ammarah makes itself evident in such features like: Bukhl (stinginess), Hirs (greed), Hasad (jealousy), Jahl (ignorance), Kibr (arrogance), Shahwat (lust), Gadab (rage), Gaflat (negligence /indifference), Tama' (avarice), Kizb (lying), Riya (show/ insincerity), Bugdh (hatred), Kinah (malice), Bid-Khalqi (rudeness), Ghibat (back- biting), La-yani (involvement in useless or absurd activities), Istihza' (mockery), harming others, either verbally or physically, and having many and unending desires.

All of these are the qualities and special features of nafse ammarah.

THE EFFECTS OF NAFSE AMMARAH.

On the basis of its innate disposition, the nafse ammarah lives in such depths of darkness (zulmat) that it makes no attempt to even try to differentiate between good and evil! My dear friend! This nafs becomes the agent for the seductions of Shaitan, and becomes Shaitan's tool. My mukhlis friend! Of your two enemies this is the greater enemy, and it is necessary for you to be very much on your toes in regard to it and also to be hushyar (alert/ wise/ on one's guard).

METHOD OF RECTIFICATION (ISLAH) OF NAFSE AMMARAH

1. Attain knowledge ('Ilm) of the shariat.
2. Take stock of one's nafs (muhasabah) every second.
3. Continuously instil the fear of death, of the punishment in the grave and of the terror-striking conditions of Qiyamah into the nafs.
4. Endow oneself with humbleness, humility and lowliness and adopt meekness and have the awareness of Allah Ta'ala (khudh') within you.
5. By means of nawafil and every type of good deed, by supplication and weeping, make it incumbent on oneself to attain the nearness of Allah Ta'ala (taqarrub ilallah), so that Allah Ta'ala may take one out of the pit of darkness which the natural propensity of the nafse ammarah wishes to keep one in.

Warning

My dear friend! Do not ever feel terrified or get dejected so that you stop making du'a; and also do not consider victory and success to be remote and thus become lazy and lose heart: These abolish the relationship the murid has to build up. To the contrary, whatever instructions (ta'lim) you have been given, carry them out swiftly

and enthusiastically. And stay away from those activities which make one negligent (gafil) of one's real Maula-Mehbub (i.e. Allah Ta'ala). Leave aside any involvement in useless activities (la-yani).

There you have it! These are all the tasks in front of you in the phase of nafse ammarah, in order to be liberated from its clutches.

NAFSE LOWWAMAH

Nafse lowwamah is called such for this reason that when the nafs involves the person in some bad or evil, the person then scolds and reproaches himself.

QUALITIES AND SPECIAL FEATURES OF NAFSE LOWWAMAH

Malamat (self-reproach), Hawa (desire), Makr (craftiness/ deceit), Ujub (conceit), Riya (show/ insincerity), Zulm (cruelty/ oppression), Ghibat (back-biting), Kizb (lying), Gaflat (negligence/ indifference), Hubbe Jah (love of fame, prestige), Hubbe Shahwat (love of pleasures). It will be seen that some of these qualities are to be found in nafse ammarah as well.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AMMARAH AND LOWWAMAH

Despite sharing many qualities, the difference between ammarah and lowwamah is that lowwamah accepts Haq (Truth) to be Haq and Batil (falsehood) to be Batil, fasid (corruption) to be fasid and qabih (bad/ evil) to be qabih and, compared to its previous state, accepts it to be so even more than before.

This is because in this phase Allah Ta'ala causes some light, which is termed angelic light (malakیti roshni), to enter the salek's heart. With the strength of this light the salek undertakes mujahadah (striving against the nafs), which will then

release and save him from the vile and loathsome qualities (akhlaqe razilah-o-zamimah) of the nafs and adorn and embellish himself with praiseworthy qualities (akhlaqe hamidah).

However, at this stage he has not gained that release yet. But the urge and desire to follow the shariat have been created in him and thoughts of making mujahadah towards this end have also arisen. That is why in this phase some good deeds (a'male salehah) do make their appearance, e.g. namaz, rozah, zakat, sadqah, tilawat, some tasbihats, etc. However, with these good deeds there is some contamination with loathsome qualities as well, such as riya, ujub and seeking praise. There is a desire for praise and adulation from the creation for the good deeds he performs.

Now that he has reached this stage, by being watchful he continually becomes aware of his evil actions and his faults, and this forms the basis for removing negligence.

METHOD OF RELEASE

This is quite simple. To progress out of this phase only two tasks have to be undertaken:

1) Mujahadah - striving against the nafs.

2) Kathrate zikr - an abundance of zikr.

METHOD OF PROGRESS

Progress depends on removing the remaining loathsome qualities. So, when in this phase the luminescence of his deeds (tajalli -af'ali) manifests itself, then ujub and

riya will come to an end. This is because the salek will then not consider any action to be his own and therefore will not become vain or conceited on any action (amal) of his. My dear friend! He will remain all the time in the gratitude (shukr) and praise (hamd) of his Creator and Master. And he will be in constant fear and anxiety lest this ne'mat (blessing) be snatched away should there be some shortcoming in his shukr. Thus, there will be no ujub and no riya.

However, at this stage the salek is confronted with an abundance of wisawis (whisperings from Shaitan) and khawatir (showering of dispersed thoughts). The treatment whereby these whisperings and thoughts can be repelled is simply to ignore them! Also, to make an abundance of audible zikr (zikre jehr) and to continually plead for Allah Ta'ala's protection from every such thing from amongst Shaitan and men that will cut one off from Allah Ta'ala.

NAFSE MUTMA'INNAH

When, by the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala, the phases of ammarah and lowwamah have been traversed, by a process of mujahadah and riyadhat, by making an abundance of zikr and by giving preference to seclusion (khalwat) over mixing with others (jalwat), together with a careful watch over and a monitoring of the nafs, there is a continual turning towards Allah Ta'ala (ruju' ilallah), then a special condition or state (kaifiyet) of serenity and tranquillity (sakinah-o-tamaniyet) becomes firmly established. This is then said to be a state of mutma'innah.

QUALITIES AND SPECIAL FEATURES OF MUTMA'INNAH

The salek develops the following: Joad (generosity); Tawakkul (trust/ confidence

in Allah Ta'ala); Khashiyet-o-Tazallul (fear of Allah Ta'ala and humility); involvement in Ibadat; Radha-o-Shukr (to be happy with Allah Ta'ala and to be grateful); Uns-o-Shouq (tranquillity and passion); obedience to the shariat; the attraction towards obedience (ta'at) becomes a natural disposition; repugnance to sins becomes a feature of his nature; he develops permanent independence of gairullah (everything else except Allah); his character becomes so moulded to that of Rasulullah (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) that he is not at peace if he does not follow (ittiba') Rasulullah (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam); Fana'yete kamilah (complete annihilation); and Ihsane tam (the awareness all the time that Allah Ta'ala is watching him).

EFFECTS OF HIGH STAGES OF NAFSE MUTMA'INNAH

This is a stage (maqam) of tamkin (gravity/ power) and of ainal yaqin (seeing with conviction) and is a stage of imane kamil (complete iman). At the time of reaching this stage in your batin your muhabbat for Rasulullah (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) will take on a completely different and special hue, different from the muhabbat that you previously had.

Warning

My dear friend! Remember this and always keep it in mind: Having reached this stage do not ever lay claim to perfection. In other words, do not even for a moment think that you have escaped from the clutches of the nafs, because then you will consider yourself to be safe from the influence of your nafs and you will become negligent about its propensity to commit sin. Whereas, my dear friend, one should

never ever be relaxed where it concerns one enemy! For, no matter how much he proclaims that he is your friend, you would have read or heard the following:

Even if your enemy speaks in a friendly manner and he speaks about grain, then too consider it to be a trap!

ESSENCE OF THE SPECIAL EFFECTS OF NAFSE MUTMA'INNAH

So, when you have been blessed with the stage of tamaniyet in your nafs, then its special quality is this that obedience to the Kitab and Sunnat gushes throughout your entire body, through every root of every hair, through every vein and artery, and through every muscle and sinew! Thus, the shariat becomes for you, my dear friend, your very tabiyet. The effect of this is that the special Grace and Mercy-filled Hand of Allah Ta'ala will absorb you! This is that "Yuh-bib-kumullah" that is promised in the Qur'an Sharif.

This absorption (juzb) is different from that absorption that presents itself in the initial stages of sulوk. The reason is that this juzb (absorption) is based on complete obedience (kamil ittiba').

You then become the perfect example of this ayet:

If ye love Allah, follow me, Allah will love you...

My dear friend! At this point, from the hidden voice will this call be sounded:

O Nafse Mutma'innah...!

That is it! The effect now witnessed will be a state of forgetfulness (nisyan), and from that side will be the unseen (ghaibat) and here your heart will be everlastingly

occupied in experiencing the Splendour of Haq (mushahadah jamale Haq) in such a manner that you will never tire of it and you will not be satiated with it!

EFFECTS OF NAFSE MUTMA'INNAH

My dear mukhlis friend! Now, at this stage where you have attained complete iman (kamale iman) with conviction of seeing (ainal yaqin), this will be the situation that the eyes of people will find delight in making your ziyarat and listeners will lend an ear to what is been spoken. This is because the salek, when he reaches this stage, personifies that person mentioned in the Hadithe Qudsi, where Allah Ta'ala says,

"I become this bandah's eyes with which he sees, I become his tongue with which he speaks, I become his hands with which he holds, I become his feet with which he walks and I become his heart with which he reflects!"

My dear friend! When he has attained this stage, the tongue becomes the interpreter of the Reality (Haqa'iq) of affairs and of the secrets of the shariat, all of which Allah Ta'ala instils into his heart and for which he is indebted neither to the study of any kitab, nor to listening to the words of anybody. But, my dear friend, a Voice from Haq Ta'ala reaches into his batin:

I am your Concealed One, O My beloved! And you are My concealed one. So, cool your eyes and be happy.

My dear friend! These are the special features of nafse mutma'innah and its qualities and its effects.

May Allah Ta'ala, with His fadhl, bless my dear mukhlis friend and muhibbe sadiq with this.

Ahqar Muhammed Masihullah, afi anhu.
5 Muharram 1385 A.H.

20. ANOTHER LETTER
[Another short letter from the same kitab is also reproduced.]

ESSENCE OF THE RUH OF SULUK
mujahid is one who makes jihad (strives) against his nafs.

1 TALAB (desire/ quest) is the objective. Wusیl (attainment) is not an objective. This is confirmed by the Ahle Tariq (scholars of Tasawwuf).

And when the above is accepted, then one should not nurture in one's heart the demand and insistence on achieving what is not one's objective, because this is also a barrier. The reason is that by nurturing such a demand one is all the time in anxiety and disquietude in anticipation of what is not an objective. This anxiety and disquietude causes severance of jam'iyet and tafwidh (peace of mind and a state of entrusting), whereas both jam'iyet and tafwidh are pre-conditions for attainment (wusul).

My dear friend! Embed this and ground it in firmly within yourself!

2. MUJAHADAH is an objective and is of two types:
a. Mujahadah haqiqiyah: To be involved in good deeds and to be steadfast in their

performance, and to stay away from sin.

b. Mujahadah hikmiyah: To refrain from those mubahat that lead one towards sin.

The Reality of Mujahadah

The reality of mujahadah is this that one should refrain from sin completely by resisting and opposing the nafs, and this resisting and opposing the nafs is wajib and fardh (compulsory). Also, one should oppose the nafs to a lesser extent in what is mubah, and here resisting and opposing the nafs is mustahab (meritorious). However, opposing the nafs in this latter situation is such that attaining that stage of opposition which is wajib is dependent on this opposition which is mustahab.

Examples of Mujahadah Mustahabah

To eat less; to sleep less; to associate less with others; to speak less; not to wear very fine clothes.

May Allah Ta'ala grant my mukhlis, muhib and sadiq friend the wealth of wusul and ridha and nisbat. amin.

Ahqar Muhammed Masihullah, afi anhu.

7 Muharram 1385 A.H. Yakshambah (Sunday).

Chapter No.:8

1.FOREWORD

Through the fadhl of Allah Taala, and the barkat of our sheikh (R.A.), this eighth booklet is now ready.

Our Deen has five categories, namely:

l. Aqaid - Beliefs,

2. Ibadat - Worship,

3. Muamulat - Dealings,

4. Akhlaq - Quality of ones character, and

5. Muasharat - Social etiquettes and lifestyle.

In the kitabs Hayatul-Muslimeen and Aadabul-Muasharat Hadhrat Thanvi (R.A.) has adequately shown the importance of all these five categories in the life of everybody who is Muslim.

The sheikh, in his capacity as a guide to that person seeking closeness to Allah Taala, has, as his duty, the task of correcting the seeker in all these categories.

Should the sheikh not correct the mureed, the sheikh is abusing the trust and responsibility placed on him. Alhamdulillah, Hadhratjee (R.A.) took special care to guide his mureeds in all aspects of the Deen. The affection and special concern shown by Hadhratjee (R.A.) can be seen in all his works and all his majalis.

In this majlis, although the emphasis is on muasharat, a wide variety of topics are discussed and explained in such a manner as to make us understand quite easily the points being driven home.

May Allah Taala give us all the taufeeq to practise on the teachings contained in these majalis. Aameen.

Dr. Ismaiel Mangera

(This is a translation of a majlis-e-khas held by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammed Maseehullah Khan saheb (R.A.) in Jalalabad, India, on the 30th of August 1989, corresponding to the 27th of Muharram 1410

2.ITHAR

What is ithar ? It is to take on oneself such takleef (trouble/ inconvenience), which is not beyond ones tolerance, in consideration of bringing rahat (ease and comfort) to others.

This is the taleem (teaching) in Islam.

Despite being Muslim, we Muslims have not understood Islam. What an amazing phenomenon!

Putting it differently: Despite being members of a household, we have not understood our home! Being members of a household, we have not recognised our home!

Islam is a house, a basic fort, belonging to the Muslims. Yet we have not recognised this.

Yes... We are Muslims. Well... Yes... Admittedly, we are Muslims...

Like wealth: A person possesses a mere hundred rupees. Yes, admittedly, it may be said that he possesses wealth. But, is he really wealthy, especially in present times?

I have heard with my own ears people, in spite of having one lakh rupees (100,000 rupees) saying, I consider myself to be poor! So what is a mere 100 rupees?

It was different in the past. We have passed through such an era, and seen an age, where people used to say of anyone in possession of a hundred rupees, in a tone of awe, That is a very rich person!

If somebody were to pick a quarrel with this person, others would quickly draw him to one side and reprimand him in subdued tones, Are you picking a quarrel with him? Dont you know that he is a very rich man? He has a hundred rupees!

Today, if anybody has one lakh rupees, it is considered insignificant.

Similarly with Muslims: Yes... Well... It may be said that they are Muslims. Even though most aspects of Islamic teachings are not to be found in them, and more un-Islamic features are found, even so, one concedes that they are Muslims. What type

of Muslims...? Anyhow, they are still Muslims. Kindly note the tone of my voice in my making these remarks. Do you understand what I am trying to convey?

Another example:
If a person owns five or ten acres of land, technically he will be said to be owning land - he has land, whereas the next person may have nothing. But can he be called a landowner in the real sense of the word? Of course not! If he were to boast to be a landowner, he would merely be making a laughing stock of himself.

Similarly, Muslims are themselves making a laughing stock of Islam. It is not others who are making a laughing stock of the Muslims. The Muslims themselves are making Islam an object of mockery.

Should we tread firmly, and completely, along the path of Islam, with an even temperament (mustaqil mizaj), then nobody will have any occasion to mock or sneer.

We are the ones inviting others to mock and sneer.

3.DO NOT INCLINE TOWARDS THOSE WHO MADE ZULM
Be as it may, we consider ourselves to be Muslims. Well and good. This is also of use. We will be forgiven on that basis. However, it is to be seen whether this forgiveness comes after being censured, or after being slapped, or after being given a whacking. Or - Allah Taala forbid! - being punished by the fire of Jahannam touching us, even though the full force of the fire does not envelop
US.
As is stated in the Quran shareef, where the Mumins are being addressed:

(0 Muslims!) Do not incline towards those who have committed zulm (injustice/ oppression)

There are huffaz sitting here to bear me out as to the correctness of this ayet. Amongst you sitting here are also scholars, teachers and students - molvi-saheban, mudarraseen and tulaba.

(0 Muslims!) Do not incline towards those who have committed zulm (injustice/ oppression) - committed zulm to themselves by adopting shirk and kufr. Do not adopt their ways! Do not imitate them in matters of muamulat (transactions) and muasharat (social etiquettes and lifestyle).

As far as ibadat (worship) is concerned, Muslims do not imitate them: When a Muslim makes namaz, does he not make sajdah to Allah Taala? Obviously, a Muslim neither makes ruku nor sajdah to idols, or to pictures placed in front of him, or to hand-fashioned statuettes, etc.

So, 0 Muslims! Make sure that you neither incline towards nor adopt the habits, the muamulat and muasharat of the mushrikeen and kuffar. Be aware! It should not happen that the fire of Jahannam touches you, caresses you!*

The touch of that fire is very severe!

4.A TOUCH OF THE FIRE

You may have noticed how, occasionally, cigarette smokers take a puff on their cigarettes, not realising that there is only a stub left, and burn their fingers. Immediately they wince, Uf! Uf! and drop the cigarette because of the pain they experience. This is the reaction to pain from the lighted end of a mere cigarette!

And what is the intensity of the fire of Jahannam? If one were to take the most intensely cold ice in this world, so many degrees below freezing, and use this ice to cool down the fire of Jahannam seventy times, then the resultant heat will equal the heat of the fire we have in this world! And what is the intensity of the fire in this world? Just a very slight contact is enough to cause severe burns.

It is in connection with this fire that Allah Taala states: 0 Muslims! Be alert! Be hushyar! Live with a sense of modesty, a sense of honour! Do not become objects of mockery! Do not make of yourselves playthings!

Just see how much affection Allah Taala is showing. See how Allah Taala is trying to explain to the Mumin, trying to make him understand.

If, even after all this, the Mumin refuses to accept, then the responsibility is entirely his!

Allah Taala tried to make Shaitan understand, but he had refused to understand. It was his pride that caused him to become arrogant. He started arguing, putting his own proofs in front of Allah Ta'ala. He had the audacity to attempt to prove that Allah Taalas hukum (command) was contrary to wisdom!

What was the final outcome? After being made to understand, he still refused to understand, we all know what became of Shaitan.

So, 0 Insan! 0 Muslim! Zate Bari Taala is trying time and again to make you understand, point out to you:
See here. You are Muslim. Do you understand? You have laid claim to Islam. In

your heart you have accepted and have held the firm conviction of My existence, and the existence of various matters pertaining to the Unseen - which I have made known to you - such as the existence of Jannat, the Day of Qiyamat, of Hisab-kitab (Reckoning), of Resurrection after death, etc. The requirement of this conviction is, surely, that you should obey whatever command I give to you. Believing in Me entails these obligations, that whatever I tell you to do, you should do:

Whichever place I forbid you to sit, do not sit there.

Whichever place I tell you to sit, sit there.

Whatever work I forbid you to do, do not do it.

Whatever work I tell you to do, do it.

This is what is meant by the word believing (maan-na).

And, if the above is not the case, then we will term it knowing (jan-na), but definitely not believing!

5.MAN-NA AND JAN-NA

The two are different. Jan-na (knowing) is one thing, whereas man-na (believing) is something else.

For example:

You will find non-Muslims stating, We do not reject the fact that Islam is a true religion.

However, this belief is held in such a way that Islam is not given precedence over other religions.

This is, therefore, knowing (jan-na), but it is definitely not believing (man-na)! So, of what use is that?

It is a different issue completely that we use the term Allah, and others use the term Bhagwan (God). However, they associate other things with that term. They behave towards the creation in a manner that should be entirely reserved for Allah Taala. They believe that others have a right to intercede for them, and that by their intercession their work will be done. In this way Allah Taala has been made a joint partner, having no choice but to accept the intercession of the others, irrespective of whether the plea is worthy of being accepted or not. Whereas all that Allah Taala does, He does through complete freedom and choice (not under compulsion from others). So, these people are associating other things in the attributes (sifat) of Allah Taala.
How can this be termed "believing (man-na)? It is merely knowing (jan-na). That is why Allah Taala time and again states:
"0 ye who believe in Me! Fear me!

Do not commit such acts which are contrary to belief in Me! Do not follow the ways of other nations. Your affairs and dealings should not be like theirs. Your habits should not be like theirs. Your apparel, your speech and conversation, your sitting and standing, your moving about and travelling, your gazing and looking, your homelife, your appearance, your styles and modes, should not be like theirs. You are Muslim!

What we are discussing is mushabahat - imitation.

6.UNIFORMS

What can one do? But at times, in order to make you understand, one has to make use of an English word. The word is uniform. All of you know what it means. It is the special style, mode or dress belonging to a specific group.

For example:

The police force forms one specific government department. The armed force also forms a specific department in the government. Now, are their respective outfits the same? The answer is no.

Take the different ranks within each group: Are the outfits exactly the same for everybody, or are there differences to distinguish one rank from another?

Obviously, there are differences.

The same will apply to the other forces - the navy, the air force, etc.

Take the rank of captain in each force. The uniform and insignia of the captain will differ from other ranks in the same force, as well as from the same rank in the 'other forces. The captain in each force will thereby be identified as a captain belonging to his specific force.

If the captain in the police force were to wear the uniform and insignia of a captain in the defence force, he will be guilty of having committed an offence.

If, 'in his defence, he were to state, I have not adopted the uniform of another country. The uniform I am wearing is, after all, that of the same government, will

he be let off? Of course not! He will still be found guilty of having committed an offence.

These examples are being used to make the little ones understand. May Allah Taala make it that we can understand!

The issue is quite clear and simple.

If a captain in the police force were to don the uniform of a captain in the army, and he were to present himself to one of his superiors, the Inspector-General for example, the conversation would go something like this:

I-G: And who are you?
Capt: Sir! I am one of the captains serving under you.
(The whole countrys police force is under the Inspector-General.)
I-G: But the uniform you are wearing is that of an army captain. What is the meaning of this impudence?
(Understandably, he is not only upset, but offended as well.)
I-G: How do you expect me to recognise you? By your uniform I would have taken you to be a captain in the defence force. Yet you state that you are one of my captains in the police force!

The captain will be duly charged and suspended from duties. A hearing will take place as to why he wore the uniform of a captain in the army. If it is found that he had sufficient justification, he would be re-instated. If no justification is found, he will be dismissed from his office.

Do you get the point? Just for slightly changing his clothes, charges have been laid. For a while, even if this period is very short, he has been said to be an offender, and has been suspended from duties. Is this not an ignominy, a disgrace, a slur on his character? His subsequent dismissal is another matter.

So, for this short while, is it not a situation of Fatamassukumunnaar - the Fire touching him? By committing an offence, and being an offender, is he not facing the possibility of dismissal?
This is why these matters have to be explained.
Now do you understand, children? Bach-cho... bacho!

Guard yourselves from adopting the dealings and lifestyles - the mu'amulat and muasharat - of the non-Muslims: their clothing and dressing, their form and appearance, their ways of eating and drinking, etc.

Those who have niade zulm on themselves by not bringing iman on Allah Taala, do not make your appearance, your features, like theirs. It should not happen that the punishment that is going to befall them, befalls you!

Accepted that on the basis of iman and believing in Us, We forgive you. However, for a few days, by virtue of the fact that you imitated their ways and modes, and thereby became offenders, We will suspend your entrance into Jannat. Not dismissed permanently. No. Dismissal is for the non-Muslims, the kuffar. But it could happen that you are suspended for a few days when you come in Our Presence, and permission to enter that home from which you had originally come, is not granted as yet.

In our worldly situation, if any noble and respectable person is suspended even for one day, how much shame will he not suffer because of his honour being besmirched.

And just think: one day in the Hereafter is equivalent to a thousand years in this world! This is stated in the Quran shareef.

This is nothing to be amazed about. You must be aware that even here on earth there are certain countries where the sun does not set for six months - that oneday will last six months. So, why be amazed that one day in the Hereafter can equal a thousand years here?

If an offender is given one days punishment in the Hereafter, it will be equivalent to one thousand years here.

However, this offender has not been banished to Jahannam forever. He is not being deprived of Jannat forever. His entrance to Jannat has been suspended for some time.

For this reason that the iman with which you have been sent, you have incorporated in it the appearance of another, a non-Muslim. His religion of shirk and kufr you have not adopted, but you have surely adopted his modes, his styles, his appearance - the features of mutineers and rebels.

7.TRUE MUHABBAT

Are these not acts bringing displeasure? What type of muhabbat (love) do you profess?

Look at it this way: You have a friend who professes to have muhabbat for you. You also have an enemy. Now, your friend, who professes to have affection for you, deliberately wears the clothes that your enemy wears. Will you be pleased? Will you tolerate it?

No, you will not be pleased, and you will not tolerate your friends action. So, how do you expect Allah Taala to be pleased?
That person, that Muslim, who believes in Me, has adopted the dress of others! Will there not be cause for Him to show displeasure? Definitely He will be displeased.

This persons religion has not changed. However, in his heart which should have expressed Islamic values at the practical level, that amount of change has occurred! Therefore, displeasure!

Coming back to your friend: He says, Brother, I have muhabbat for you.
Your response is, "That I do not deny. But, is this the quality of your muhabbat that you have donned the clothes of my enemy? Just how much displeasure are you not causing me? Just stop to think for a while!

In the same way Allah Taala is saying, 0 Muslim! I have specified for you an Islamic uniform, that, when you leave your home, you be recognised as a Muslim! From top to bottom, you should be identified as a Muslim!
The dread and fear that should have been in you, for Me, you have replaced with fear of My enemies? So much so, that you have changed your dressing and

appearance? Is this how much you fear them? Whereas My khauf (fear) should have been greater than everything else!

8.CIVILITY AND COURTEOUSNESS

Yes... Yes... Yes... That much concession I have allowed. How much? When somebody comes to you, for example, a non-Muslim ruler or high-ranking official, then you may adopt those worldly customary civilities and courtesies appropriate to the occasion.

If, instead of a high-ranking official, an ordinary clerk were to come to you, then your hospitality and civility will be tailored to his level. It is apparent that one will take into account the status of the individual when being courteous.

I have granted permission for this. But I have not granted permission for you to change your dressing, form and appearance. My Habib Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has passed on the message to you:

Show hospitality to people according to their status.

That much permission I have granted. But I have not said that, out of consideration for them, you should copy their dressing, make your facial features and appearance like theirs.

Do you understand?

To be courteous is actually a manifestation of Islamic good character

In it is also the principle of dafae-zarar - warding off harm.

Therefore, to ward off harm, and to display Islamic good conduct and the dignity of Islam, be courteous towards them.

"This much I have not forbidden you.

But why have you changed your appearance?

Why are you dressing like them?

Why do you eat in the manner they do?

They are in the habit of standing and urinating. You have also started doing this!

They have adopted the habit of roaming from one food-laden table to another, strolling and eating, standing and eating. You too have started aping them and have started eating in this fashion.

What answer do you have?

An excellent course of studies you have undertaken!

So, you have not been barred completely from Jannat. Jannat, from whence you originally came, you will still attain. But, not as yet! No, not as yet!

9.SELFLESSNESS

We were saying: In Islam, an elevated level of good character in a person is the following:

To take upon oneself such a burden which one is capable of bearing, with that thought in mind of bringing ease and comfort to the next person.

Islam tells us to adopt selflessness (ithar).

An example:

One person sitting here has a cold. However, the room is hot and stuffy, and the room is full. On the one hand, putting on the fans will relieve the stuffiness, but, on

the other hand, this person may start sneezing and his nose may start running. His attitude should be: I will tolerate the discomfort. Put on the fans for the benefit of the others.

This is what Islam teaches. One should tolerate that takleef (difficulty and inconvenience) that is within ones capacity, out of consideration for others.

What a lofty and noble teaching! This is such a lofty taleem that, 0 Muslim, there is absolutely no question of you deliberately causing harm and difficulty to others!

We are not speaking of that situation where the other person thinks, without any basis, that he has been caused takleef by you. When this conclusion is merely imaginary, then you are not culpable.

From your side, you should have taken the necessary care and vigilance (ihtimam) to see that no takleef comes to the next person.

10.IHTIMAM

The word to note here is "ihtimam, meaning effort/ arrangement/ administration/ care/ vigilance. The root word, when analyzed further, denotes "removing grief and difficulty.

From ihtimam is derived the word "muhtamim (administrator/ manager/ principal).

One does not know who from amongst you will become a muhtamim. Nevertheless you are, at least, muhtamims in your homes.

Ihtimam, therefore, denotes that the muhtamim saheb should take on takleef on himself in order to bring ease and comfort (rahat) to others.

So, 0 Muslim! Take the necessary care and vigilance, that neither from my speech, nor from my actions, will others be harmed or placed into difficulties. There is absolutely no question of causing takleef to others deliberately. On the contrary, one has to take the necessary care and vigilance, with the correct concern (fikr), that whenever one has to speak to anybody, one should think: It should not happen that my statements should hurt the feelings of others. Think and ponder before you speak. This is what Islam teaches. Before speaking, think as follows: I wish to say something. The words, the phrases, the sentences that I am about to use, if the next person were to address me using those very words, would I be grieved? Would I feel hurt or not?

This is the crucial point one has to identify. If one concludes that those very words, if directed at you, would hurt you, then why should you direct them at others? This is the taleem of Islam. This is a basic principle and rule.

By living according to this rule, by observing this principle, both in ones home and outside, will there be peace (aman) or will there be anarchy (bid-amani)? It is obvious that there will be peace.

11AHLULLAH - MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF ALLAH

For this reason, take all the ahlullah - those who are really ahlullah - meaning those of the household of Allah Taala...

Let us pause for a moment.

Ahl: This means "members of a family.
Ahlia: This word is derived from the word above, and means the one in the house, i.e. the wife.
Able-beit: This word signifies the members of the household.
Ahlullah: These are those of the household of Allah Taala.

It is accepted that if the head of the household holds a high status, his children will be treated respectfully as well.

For example:
The son of the Collector-saheb comes to visit somebody who does not know him. That person who knows who the visitor is, will whisper into the ear of the host, in subdued tones, The Collector-sahebs son is here! He has come to visit you! The host is made aware of the status of the visitor beforehand, to make sure that the host does not inadvertently say or do anything which may offend the visitor, and the son then takes the complaint to his father, the Collector-saheb, whose annoyance would be catastrophic.
The host will, therefore, be very cautious, because the visitor is ahle-Collector-saheb.

Similarly with those who are the ahl of Allah Taala, the ahlullah. That is, if one comes to know that the person is an ahlullah.

And how would one come to know who is an ahlullah?
From the following:

Whatever orders or commands Allah Taala has issued, he carries them out, and whatever deeds Allah Taala has forbidden, he abstains from them, whether they are related to akhlaq (character), or to muamulat (transactions), or to ibadat (worship) or to muasharat (social lifestyle).
This person will be of the ahlullah. These are the features by which the ahlullah are recognised. This is the uniform by which they are identified. Do not expect the word ahlullah to be written in big letters on their foreheads!

To expand further:
The ahlullah carry out those orders which Allah Taala has commanded to be carried out. They are not satisfied at merely carrying out orders which pertain to what is fardh and wajib only, but also carry out those injunctions which fall in the categories of sunnat, of mustahab, and also of azeemat, as much as opportunity and health allows.

That person who performs what is fardh and wajib, but leaves out what is sunnat, how can he be an ahlullah?

If this person loves Allah Taala, and this muhabbat is the motivating force behind his obedience to the orders of Allah Taala, then what type of muhabbat does this person have for Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) that he is not obedient to him also?

12.COVERING OF THE ANKLES:
Whenever you see him, his lungi or the legs of his pants are covering his ankles. What type of ahlullah is this that, though he is wearing the correct uniform, its

detail and design are incorrect? What type of uniform is this?
The ankles should not be covered. The lungi or the legs of the pants should end above the ankles.

To cover the ankles, to allow the legs of the pants to hang below the ankles is HARAAM! The namaz is not qabul - not accepted!

You now know the masalah. The importance of attaining ilm (knowledge of Deen) cannot be over emphasised.

All types of topics are discussed in a majlis. Just as ones practical akhlaqi life is tailored and refined, so too ilmi qanuni masael (laws of the shariat) are brought to your attention at the same time, because, basically, one has to act according to these laws and masael of the shariat.

You will be questioned:
Fair enough - you wore a kurta and pants. But why were your ankles covered? What answer have you got? Is this the way an ahlullah behaves? And even while performing namaz your ankles remained covered! If your namaz is not qabul, how can the namaz of the musallees be qabul?
Such a person is not of the ahlullah. No, he is not of the household of Allah Taala!

A person belonging to a household is one who tries to follow the ways of that person who is the acknowledged elder. By bringing on the elders displeasure, by discarding his ways, how can he be called a member of the ahle-beit? So too with the ahlullah.
Do you understand?

13.EATING WITH THE RIGHT HAND

Take the question of eating:

Yes, you ate your food using your right hand, and you drank liquids using your right hand. Eating and drinking with the left hand are not permissible - it is na-jaez.

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has said that eating and drinking with the left hand is the work of Shaitan.

Eating and drinking are acts of ibadat, and fall in the category of ones muasharati lifestyle, that one should eat and drink using ones right hand. Even this aspect of ones living has been taught to us by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

However, you must have witnessed the following situation:

A person is sitting and drinking tea, using his right hand, which is correct. He now takes a biscuit, using his left hand, and while he drinks his tea using the right hand, he eats the biscuit using his left hand.

This Muslim is acting contrary to the laws of Islam.

14.RECITING 'BISMILLAH' WHEN EATING

Not to say bismillah and to eat and drink is the work of the kuffar and mushrikeen. You will just sit down and eat without reciting bismillah? No. Recite bismillah when eating. By not reciting bismillah Shaitan becomes a partner in ones meals.

The following has appeared in the Hadith shareef:

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was sitting down to a meal. Some other Sahaba (R.A.) were also with him.

One other Sahabi (R.A.) arrived. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) invited him to eat as well. This Sahabi (R.A.) sat down in some haste and started eating without reciting bismillah.

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) kept silent.

Whilst he was eating the Sahabi (K.A.) suddenly remembered that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had said that whenever one forgets to recite "bismillah in the beginning, one should recite bismillah as soon as one remembers, by reciting:

In the name of Allah at the start and at the end.

The Sahabi (R.A.) quickly recited bismillah.

On hearing this Rasiilullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) laughed audibly.

15.LAUGHING AUDIBLY

Only on two, or, at most, three occasions has it been recorded that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) laughed audibly. Mostly, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) merely smiled.

To laugh raucously - loudly and uninhibitedly - is forbidden. This type of laughter causes deadening of the heart.

Laughing in abundance (raucously) causes deadening of the heart. Hadith shareef

The Sahaba (R.A.) were puzzled by Rasulullahs (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) laughing. 0 Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). There was no apparent reason for you to laugh at this moment. What caused you to laugh?

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) replied, This person came, sat down and

started eating. He did not recite bismillah, so Shaitan joined him in eating the food. When he remembered, he immediately recited bismillah. The moment he did this Shaitan vomited what he had eaten!

Do you see the difference between reciting bismillah when commencing to eat, and not reciting bismillah?

Others could not see, but Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) saw Shaitan eating with the Sahabi (R.A.), and subsequently vomiting.

In order to understand this, take the following situation:
(Some people find it difficult to understand certain concepts, so it becomes necessary to illustrate these concepts. This becomes difficult at times and fatigues the mind.)

If a person is possessed by a jinn, others, even though they may be standing next to this person, are unable to see the jinn. However, the person possessed by the jinn is able to see the jinn.

Similarly, there were certain occurrences which Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) witnessed but not anybody else. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) then informed the Sahaba (R.A.). And whatever Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) conveyed to the Sahaba (R.A.) is haq (the truth).

So, for the Muslim, on every occasion, the taleem of Islam is a means of elevation to a special level of dignity and nobility (shan).
By discarding these teachings and opting for the manners and ways of others

one is discarding this special dignity and nobility (shan).

Discarding this shan, this lofty status, is an insult, which, in turn, is bringing disgrace on oneself by ones own hands.

We ourselves have given others an opportunity to laugh and mock at us by us deliberately discarding our lofty status.

Why point fingers at others?

Eating is also part of the Islamic muasharati lifestyle. It is also one of the distinguishing aspects of Islam - it is an Islamic uniform!

Your manner of eating is different, and the manner of eating of others is different.

So, ones uniform is not only ones apparel and features, but ones manner of eating also forms part of ones uniform.

Do you understand, little ones? Bach-cho... bacho!

Save yourselves from adopting the lifestyles and manners - the uniform - of others.

16.UTENSILS

Take a utensil like the iota (spouted jug), which is made of copper. Non-Muslims also possess these iotas, and they also make use of them. The iotas of non-Muslims have no tin-plating, whereas your (Muslims) iota should be plated with tin. Islam teaches that there should be a difference even in the appearance of copper utensils which are in common use by Muslims and

non-Muslims, and which have the same name, such as the Iota. This does not apply to utensils made of other material.

Why?

Be assured that this is not a case of ta'assub." Taassub means that one stubbornly refuses to accept the haq (truth).

This is different: This is to remain steadfast on haq - to set aside the use of those items which will bring about a difference in haq. If, by adopting the methods and practices of others (i.e. non-Muslims), a change occurs in our true and proper practices, then Islam says that these practices should be discarded. Otherwise, by being connected to their practices, etc., it should not happen that items of their shirk also infiltrate into you!

If today you have adopted an indifferent attitude to the iota, then tomorrow you will not bother about your mode of dressing.

And when you have become careless about your dressing, and started adopting their modes, then the next day you will not bother about your features.

And when you go about in this fashion, going around unconcerned about your facial features, then do not be surprised that your heart, which was initially pure of shirk, is also now contaminated with items of shirk!

Do you understand this gradual, step-by-step process of erosion?

17.GIVE A FINGER...

So, why have you, in the first place, presented your finger to Shaitan to grasp? Why have you given your enemy the opportunity to grab hold of your finger? Merely presenting your finger to Shaitan has certain implications. Shaitan bubbles with joy, Aha! Aha! His tabiyet (temperament) is inclining towards me! Shaitan gently caresses the finger. My work is done! My task is accomplished!" And he

goes forth. Before you know what is happening, he has taken full control. This is so, especially in this age, where such situations are openly in evidence.

Take this practical example:

A person approaches you. He may be a Muslim. He may be an acquaintance. He may be somebody closer, an actual friend.

Looking very despondent, he pleads, My very dear brother! Ive got myself into a jam! I got into debt and I had to sell my house. You do have an empty spare room. Please be kind enough to let me have the use of that room.

You take pity on him, and you let him have the room.

Time passes.

You enquire, You said that you will be searching for other accommodation. What is happening?

Yes, I am searching, but I havent found anything yet, he replies.

Four months pass by. Then six. Soon, a year has passed. Now you order him to vacate, but he stubbornly refuses. He will not leave.

Not only that, but he is one step ahead. He has been to the authorities and filed some false papers, claiming ownership of the whole house!

A court case is now pending.

However, before the case comes up, he approaches you and makes an offer, Let us compromise. You give me twenty thousand rupees, and I will withdraw my claim.

Have such incidents not occurred? They have. They have been brought to my notice. You may have heard of them also.

(Several people in the majliskhana affirm this to be so.J

So, you can see what type of Muslim he turned out to be. You can see the quality of his Islam.

You took pity on him. You tried to be magnanimous to him in his hour of need. You provided him with a room - you extended a finger to him to hold on to. But he turned out to be Shaitans brother! He tried to grab the whole house! Why did you extend your finger to the enemy to grasp? How did you allow yourself to be duped into thinking that he was a loyal friend? Why did you fall for his sweet talk?

There was poison mixed with his sweetness! There was enmity hidden under the cloak of his friendship!

Similarly, by extending a finger for Shaitan to grasp, slowly, steadily, he has now taken full control!

When you left home to go to the bazaar or to some neighbourhood, and there was a female (or a young lad) present, very pretty and becoming, why did you lift your gaze to look at her?

If your glance did fall on her inadvertently, why did you not lower your gaze immediately'

Had you not fixed your gaze on her, your heart would not have become infatuated; and you would not have pined for her; and you would not have lost your' honour; and you would not have squandered all your wealth; and you would not have suffered disgrace in the eyes of people!
All these misfortunes are nothing but a result of your looking at her! Do you understand the above example and the sequence of events?

Allah Taala had already stated long before, that you should not look at a ghair-mahram. The cause of these misfortunes coming to you is your looking at her, that you then laid down your whole life and future at her feet.

Just why did you extend your finger? Just why did you lift your gaze and look at her? Why did you not realise, beforehand, the folly of lifting your gaze to stare at her? Just why did you allow Shaitan to get to you?

But, one hears it said very often, Allah-Mia has given us eyes to look with. What is the harm in looking?

Enmeshed in Shaitans web!
The harm, dear brother, is that you will destroy your entire life!

18.GAMBLING
Take gambling. You see people sitting and gambling on the pavements. A youngster goes there to stand and watch. He is just watching, mind you. He is not gambling. His father passes by, sees him standing there, gives him a hard slap and pulls him away.

Was the youngster gambling? No, he was merely standing and watching. Yet, he was given a hard slap by his father. Because today he is standing and watching, and tomorrow he will be sitting with them, and the next day he will be gambling like them!

So, stop him before the rot sets in!

Should the police arrive on the scene, they will pounce on all those present at the scene, those sitting as well as those standing. All will be considered to be guilty of being accomplices in the act.

Do you understand these examples?

Not extending ones finger to Shaitan is not an act of taassub (opposing the haq). On the contrary, it is a situation of safeguarding ones heart from being affected by the smoke of shirk, to save it from matters of kufr.

T'herefore, the iota in your house should be such that it is not an imitation of the iota in their house. Today it is the iota. Tomorrow it will be your dressing; and the day after it will be your features and appearance; and then it will be your heart, which will slowly, slowly slowly incline towards them.

What harm is there? What harm? This is the harm just outlined!

Allah Taala has given you direction:

Just see that you do not incline towards any such items of theirs...
Note that the operative word used here means to incline/ to bend towards.

The word amal (to act), has not been used. Do not let your temperament incline in that direction. It has not been stated that you should not act that way, because, once there is an inclination, then action will surely follow!
So, do not incline. This inclination is the preamble to being involved in activities like theirs.

Remember: As Mumins, you will not remain in Jahannam forever. On the other hand, it will not happen that you will be allowed to enter Jannat straightaway! Your entry will be suspended.

Because of your bad actions you will be prevented, for a time, from entering Jannat, which is your original home from which you had been sent. Because of your opposition at the practical level to Allah Taalas commands, at this same level there has been placed an obstacle to your entrance into Jannat for a while. For such there will be punishment for a few days.

Do you understand?

To continue:
We were speaking of the ahlullah - the members of the household of Allah Taala.

They know what, in the house of Allah Taala, is for eating, and what is not for eating. Being members of the household they are aware of this. What is not for eating, they will abstain from.

Take this example:
A mouse in the house drove a certain person crazy. At times the mouse would

nibble at roti; at times it would gnaw the clothes; at times his wallet was dragged away; and so forth. The mouse drove him frantic.

This person then went to buy some strychnine (a rodent poison used in the old days) from the market, and he mixed it with some roti to poison the mouse. This he then placed in the house for the mouse to eat. So, there is now strychnine in the house as well.

Will the members of the household now eat the strychnine? Of course not. The members of the household will eat what is meant to be eaten, and what is not meant to be eaten, they will leave alone!

So, too, the ahlullah, the members of the household of Allah Taala. They will eat what is meant to be eaten - that is, they will act on what has been commanded; and what is not meant to be "eaten they will abstain from - that is, they will refrain from those actions and deeds which are forbidden.
They are the ahlullah!

Their hallmark is: Always, continuously and assi'duously acting according to the orders of Allah Taala. That is, to carrying out what has been ordered, and abstaining from what has been forbidden, both with regard to external deeds (zahiri amal) as well as internal deeds (batini amal).

19.INTOXICANTS

Take alcohol. It is haraam to drink alcohol. This is of the zahiri amal.
Now take a batini (inner) quality: Takabbur (arrogance). This is not a physical substance to eat or drink. Yet, takabbur is something that the nafs feeds on!

Just as alcohol is haraam, so too is takabbur haraam.
Just as alcohol is to be avoided, so too is takabbur to be avoided.
The former intoxicates the body; the latter intoxicates the nafs (ego).

If a person has left off alcohol, but he has not left off takabbur, he is not of the ahlullah!

Another example:
A person performs namaz, but he does so to obtain self-satisfaction.
Upon somebody speaking harshly to him, his anger flares up, and he is ready to start a fight.
This person is not of the ahlullah!
These examples are placed before you with the taufeeq of Allah Taala.

These are not real ahlullah. Yes, there is no doubt that they are Mumin. As for being ahlullah...? Yes... Well... A teeni-weeni bit, a teeni-weeni bit. But real and proper ahlullah? Not at all. However, conceded, a teeni-weni bit.

Another example:
A father tell his son not to eat a certain food, because it will cause stomach cramps.
He will not die, but he will suffer from stomach-ache.
The child does not listen, and eats what has been forbidden to him. As a result the child becomes ill, even though he does not die.
Similarly with iman: involvement in prohibited acts causes a definite weakness to come into ones iman, even though ones iman does not slip away.
So, why did you take on such things that bring about a feebleness in your iman? It

is a mere iota, but what type of iota is it? It is merely food, but what sort of member of the household is he that eats what is forbidden to him?

A person with iman is an allahwala because of his iman. But the question is: What type of allahwala is he? The answer: He is still green and immature!

The real allahwala is firm in all his actions. All those items that have to be discarded, external and internal, he discards. Just as he has left off alcohol, so he has left off takabbur as well!

As for deeds to be performed, he carries out what is fardh and wajib, and, in addition, he is punctual with his sunnats as well, because these are also the household items for the ahlullah.

Not like one who performs what is fardh and wajib, and omits what is sunnat!

Furthermore, this Mumin Muslim, having the necessary health, without placing himself into hardship, ensuring that there is no interference in his necessary obligations, and where there is ease, carries out what is mustahab as well. He does not leave out what is nafl.

This person is at an elevated level of being a Mumin, of being deendar. He is of the high grade of the ahlullah.

20.FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD GRADES

Take the example of matriculants:

Among the passes are those who pass with first-class passes, those who pass with second-class passes, and those who pass with third-class passes. When it comes to

entrance into university, those with first-class passes will have no difficulties. But those with third-class passes? They will surely struggle to get in, despite having passed.

Similarly, a person may be a Mumin - he has iman - but he falls in the category of third-class passes. He has passed.

However, on that Day it will be clear whether he has difficulty getting into Jannat or not.

Just like the matriculant with a third-class pass has a struggle to get into university, so this Mumin also will have a struggle to get into Jannat.
Some are granted entrance at once - the first-class passes. Others are told to wait: "There are problems with your credentials!.

These present-day examples are being used to make the little ones understand. Let us take the example a little bit further:

Possibly somebody may make a representation on your behalf. It does happen. Somebody puts in a good word, clearing the way for the student to gain entrance to the university, even though he has only a third-class pass.

So, too, those in the third-class are told to wait, while others are allowed entrance into Jannat immediately. Now, a surprising thing happens: some of those who have gained entrance immediately, are stopped!
Oh! Oh! What is this?

Allah Taala will say, "You are not such as to enter alone. Take others as well -you are being granted permission to intercede for others! For whomsoever you intercede they will gain entrance into Jannat with you!

The ulema, those who are of the household of Allah Taala, the elite, are addressed by Allah Taala, delightedly, with great muhabbat, Ma-shaallah! Ma-shaallah! Accepted! Accepted! as they intercede for others.

Yes, those very ulema, those ahlullah, about whom you used to say some very horrible things, today they are of use to you! Even some of those from amongst the third-class passes are gaining immediate entrance!

In the Hadith shareef it has been stated:

Cleanliness and good character are among the stages of Iman

Nazafat: Cleanliness / purity - Full and complete purity, zahiri (external) as well as batini (internal).

Husne-khulq: Good character, as defined by the shariat and not as understood by custom.

21.HUSNE KHULQ - GOOD CHARACTER

Customary good character is the following:

When a visitor arrives, to be courteous to him, Please do come in. Do sit down and make yourself comfortable. Here, have a cup of tea.

This is showing a good character according to social custom. It is not shari internal good character.

Shari good character has to do with internal qualities connected to the heart. Shari bad character, on the other hand, denotes bad qualities emanating from the nafs.

So, husne khulq means a good character that manifests good qualities which emanate from the heart and which does not manifest bad qualities emanating from the nafs.

22.HILM (BURDABARI) AND ZULM

One quality found in a good character is, for example, hilm, also called burdabari (forbearance).

To illustrate this quality:

Somebody has made a very nasty remark, so much so that it has struck one deeply in the heart. The heart is grieved. It finds the remark most burdensome. But one shows no reaction. It is as if having heard and not having heard are the same. Consequently, one does not say anything.

This is called hilm in Arabic, and burdabari in Farsee, meaning to lift/ bear a burden. The burden placed on the heart is being lifted or borne. Somebody has hurled abuse at one. Ones heart has found it burdensome, but ones reaction is that of indifference.

This is just one quality found in the heart of a person with husne khulq.

Amongst the qualities that Allah Taala has, one is that of Him being Haleem - One Who has Hilm.

So, this earthly Muslim has taken on this quality of hilm, and is also haleem. Why has he taken on this quality of Allah Taalas? Because he is of the ahlullah!

Let us take zulm. Zulm is: to wrongfully usurp somebody elses rights; to wrongfully seize somebody elses rights and to place a burden on his heart; to taunt and chastise others; to take away somebodys goods and wealth and thereby chastise him.

This zulm is contrary to the concept of the nazafat (purity) of Zate Bari Taala. Zulm is a defective quality, and Zate Bari Taala is free of defects. Zate Bari Taala is Nazeef (Pure):

Allah Taala is Pure and He loves purity.

Part and parcel of nazafat is the quality of hilm. Zate Bari Taala is Haleem. He is Sahebe-hilm (Perfect in the quality of hilm).
So, the Mumin should also take on this quality of hilm, and become sahebe-hilm.

On the other side we have zulm. Zate Bari Taala is clean and pure of zulm.
The Mumin, likewise, should become clean and pure of zulm.
And if the Mumin is not clean and pure of zulm, what then?
Well... Then, fine... He may be a Mumin, but still very green (kach-cha)! He may be an ahlullah, but still very green!

Do you understand my way of speaking?

Fruit that is still green, unripe, is very bitter, very sour. Ripe fruit is sweet and delicious.

The ahlullah who are ripe are sweet and delicious. They have neither sourness nor bitterness, nor are they half-and-half, half sweet and half bitter. They do not do things that are sweet and then do things which are bitter. Yes, very occasionally, incidentally, they may be involved in doing something which is wrong. This does not negate them being of the ahlullah.

But to be involved in activities that are contrary to the concept of an ahlullah every now and then, time and again, and to be speaking such things which are contrary to the concept of an ahlullah, how can he be said to be of the ahlullah? Yes... Well... He is a Muslim.

Those of you who are studying obviously wish to pass with a first-class pass, and not a third-class pass. Similarly, in ones iman and ones Deen also, the desire should be to be in the group of first-class passes.

A true desire (tamanna) is associated with resolve (iradah), and resolve goes together with correct effort. If the correct effort is not there, it shows that the resolve is incorrect. This person is thus deceiving himself and others!

There are individuals here from England and from South Africa. So, these discourses are lessons being given. Slowly, steadily, with examples and illustrations, with careful explanations, an effort is being made for the lessons to settle firmly in your hearts, so that an understanding may dawn within you.

This methodology is essential for an ustad or a lecturer to adopt. Whatever is written in the kitabs has to be explained and expanded on, by using simple examples and illustrations, so that it becomes easy for the students to understand.

This is a manifestation of the affection the ustad has for his students. This is his favour on them.

He is taking on a burden on himself in order to bring benefit to others, to bring ease and comfort to their hearts.
To bring ease and comfort can be in several forms: One is to bring ease and comfort physically. Another is to bring ease and comfort and cheer to the heart.

To continue:
Just as it is necessary to leave off zahiri prohibitions, so, too, it is necessary to leave off batini prohibitions.

This person performs his namaz, but he has not eliminated the sickness of the eyes! What is this? The following: The moment something pretty and beautiful, something gorgeous passes by in front of him, his eyes latch onto it. Imagine! He is actually busy looking at it! Whereas it is impermissible that one should gaze at what is prohibited.

Why is he looking at these distractions?

The answer is simple: There is still some deficiency in him. There are still some shortcomings in his being a kamil ahlullah, a kamil allahwala. He is still green - kachchapin!

This is the yardstick he should judge himself on. Whenever such an event occurs he should immediately reproach himself, Oh! Oh! I have fallen into error. I should not have done that! I had thought that I had reached perfection, but it appears that

there is still some deficiency in my iman. There is still no perfection in my Deen. I have still not reached top grade. I am still kachchapin!

What would first grade be?

First grade would be where he would have immediately dropped his gaze the moment his eyes fell on the distraction.

Second grade is where he notices the distraction, and his temperament is tempted to gaze at it, and he lifts his eyes to look, but he then quickly drops his gaze again.

Third grade is where he follows his inclination unchecked, and his eyes latch onto the distraction, and he keeps on looking all the time, still unchecked.

23.REMORSE AND TAUBAH

Here is another situation:

His eyes fall on the distraction. His temperament urges him to keep on looking, which he does. Suddenly he realises his error. What am I doing? He is ashamed. His heart feels contrite. He is remorseful. He is grieved at his lapse. Ive done wrong! Ya Allah! What have I done! He cries inside himself. Astigfirullah! Astigfirullah! I have done wrong! I have done wrong!

This taubah - this grief, this remorse at having done wrong - is a compensation for his lapse.

He had dropped to grade three, but this taubah has raised him to the first grade!

He has been given an opportunity. This opportunity is not granted to everybody: it is granted only where the person shows the necessary aptitude, and has had a

temporary lapse. Does this situation not arise when students have to write examinations?

This leeway is given because of his showing remorse. Instead of being in the third grade, he has been re-established in the first grade.

He has regained the position of entering Jannat at the first instance. This is because of his taubah, which has removed the obstacles in his way. Entrance has been made easy.

Had he not made taubah, had he not been remorseful, he would have remained in the third grade, with no possibility of being given an opportunity to gain the first grade.

Do you understand these examples?

It is accepted that disobedience to Allah Taala, going against His commands, is a great evil.

However, a greater evil than this is to refuse to make taubah!
Why so? Because there is a very real danger that this persons iman will slip away!

There is security of ones iman in being ashamed of ones wrongdoings, in being remorseful. The result will be that, stage by stage, each time trying to save oneself, trying to avoid the wrong, one will reach that point where one stops oneself completely from that wrongdoing. Now one is no longer involved in that wrongdoing.

Going back:

We had started off by saying that, in order to bring zahiri and batini comfort and ease to others, to bring happiness to others, to bring cheer to others, a person takes on himself such tasks and burdens, such difficulties, which are not beyond his tolerance. He says, It does not matter that I am inconvenienced, as long as he has some ease. I will tolerate the inconvenience.

For example:

There is only one roti in the house. There is absolutely nothing else to eat. I am also hungry, and a hungry beggar also appears at that same moment. (One is aware that this person is genuine, and that he is not a beggar by profession.) I am hungry. For the sake of Allah Taala, may I please have a piece of roti? he asks:

How many rotis are there? Only one. If I eat the roti, my hunger will be relieved. If he eats it, his hunger will be relieved. However, my hunger is not such that, if I do not eat that roti, I will die. I know from past experience that I can manage to stay hungry till the next meal. I have kept fasts. I have kept fasts on long, hot days even. Even on those occasions when I did not manage to eat sehri, I still fasted the whole day. No harm came to me. I did not collapse from weakness. I can manage to miss out on one roti.

So, the roti goes to the beggar! Here, you take it.

24.A MAS'ALAH CONCERNING ITHAR

Yes, if the hunger is beyond ones capacity to bear, and one may die from hunger, then the situation is different.

If I do not eat that roti, and I will die, then saving my own life takes priority.

You have rights on your life first. To save your own life is fardh. So, you will not give away that roti. Why should you give him the roti and you die of hunger? Yes, come another time, and if I have I will give.

Take another situation:

You and somebody else are in such a predicament that both of you are in the extremes of thirst. Without water both of you will not survive. You have in your possession just a little water, sufficient for only one person to take a gulp and survive.

If you give him this water, he will survive and you will die.

If you drink the water, you will survive and he will die.

In this situation drink the water yourself: It is fardh for you to save your own life.

Do you now understand the masalah concerning selflessness?

Selflessness means: to give priority to the comfort of others over ones own comfort.

Another word one may use is "qurbani (sacrifice). In other words, to place oneself in takleef (inconvenience/ trouble) in order to bring comfort to others, is to make qurbani (sacrifice).

25.ADL AND FADHL

This is Islam! Weighed in the balance!

With adl (justice) is fadhl (bounty/ mercy). If you have acted with adl (justice),

then mashaallah, that is being kamil (accomplished). You are dealing justly with everybody.

But remember, there are occasions for fadhl (bounty/ mercy) as well.

Never, at any time, make dua to Allah Taala that He should treat you with adl, for then you are asking to be destroyed!

On the contrary, always make dua for fadhl and karam (mercy and generosity).

And this being so, that you should always be making dua for Allah Taalas fadhl and karam, then you should also bring these qualities of Allah Taala into yourself.

Take your wife. She should be treated with fadhl and karam. Do not treat her with mere adl.

Should she be treated with zulm? Perish the thought! Of course, there is absolutely no question of treating her with zulm!

The least, the very bare minimum, is that she be treated with adl. This is the absolute barest minimum. Actually she should be treated, as stated, with fadhl and karam.

Why?

26.THE CREATION AND NATURE OF WOMAN

The reason is that we are facing a special difficulty here.

Allah Taala has combined us with somebody who is naturally very teri (bent).

From her initial creation Allah Taala has placed in her this quality of being very teri (bent).

When Hadhrat Adam (alayhis salam) was created in Jannat, he was all by himself. However, human nature is such that it yearns for company. Hadhrat Adam (alayhis salam) thought, How nice would it not be if there was somebody else with me too!

Jannat is a place where a mere thought becomes a wish fulfilled! In the wink of an eye, from a rib on his left side, a female appeared. Allah Taala had fulfilled his wish.

She was created from the left side, from the contrary side, as opposed to the right side. This is the first cause of her being teri.
Secondly, she was created from a rib. Now, is a rib straight or bent (teri)? We all know that a rib is bent.

What is the quality of this kink in the rib?
Let me explain: Take a piece of iron that is also bent. No matter how bent it is, it can be straightened by softening it in fire and then beating it straight.
Try the same method in attempting to straighten the rib, you will not succeed!
Fine. Use another method. Take castor oil. It has a lubricating and macerating effect. Leave the rib in castor oil, even for countless years, to soften it, and then beat it straight. You will still not succeed.
The rib will not straighten out. Instead, it will break.

So, we know that a rib is so teri, so teri, that no matter what we do, it is just not possible to straighten it out!

So, the male has been attached to a partner with these qualities! Therefore, do not be surprised if her speech and her statements are completely teri as well -irrational, illogical, vexing and insolent! Who are we speaking about? Specifically, the wife! (Not women in general.)

As for women in general... They will ensnare any unsuspecting male! Just see how they posh themselves up when they leave their homes. Be warned! Very teri they are by nature, created from a rib that is bent.
Yes, be warned! If you are not careful, and you do not pass by quickly with lowered gaze, you may well land up as the next victim!

. Yet, see how foolish they are, too.
When at home they are very unmindful of their dressing. But the moment they have to go out somewhere... Oh oho! Like some heavenly hur she emerges! By applying some make-up, a touch of red here, and a touch of white there, and by wearing glittering and fancy clothes, she has imagined herself to be a heavenly hur, when, in actual fact, she is everything but one! Just remove all that red and white colouring and you will see her actual self.

27.DUNYA IN THE GUISE OF A WOMAN
This is an exemplification of Dunya.
Hadhrat Esa (alayhis salam) was once going somewhere. Looking behind him, he saw a woman walking along, attractively, gorgeously and glitteringly dressed. He decided to investigate.

As he drew nearer he saw that she was actually an old hag, with a most hideous face!

Hadhrat Esa (A.S.) said, You rascal (trying to deceive people)! Do you really imagine that people will be enamoured of you?
She replied, Oho! The whole world is enraptured by me!
Hadhrat Esa (A.S.) said, Then, have you been faithful to your admirers?
She replied scornfully, Me? Show loyalty! I have killed all my past admirers!
Hadhrat Esa (A.S.) said, Who are you, then?
She replied, I am Dunya!

Dunya had been disclosed to Hadhrat Esa (A.S.) in the form of this old hag.

We were speaking about wives. By nature they are teri (bent).

Also, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has said: See, do not hound your wife in an effort to straighten her. She will not straighten. Instead she will break.

That is, you will end up wanting to give her talaq (divorcing her).

This is one difficulty that I referred to, namely that she is teri (bent).

28.INTELLIGENCE (AQL) AND CLEVERNESS (HUSHYARI)

The other difficulty concerns her aql (intelligence). There is a deficiency in the aql of women. Should they do anything intelligent, it is an exception, an incidental occurrence. By nature the intelligence of women is deficient. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has stated,

You women are deficient in intelligence. Hadith shareef.

Mind you, women are hushyar (clever), but they are not intelligent. Their cleverness is so astute as to snatch away the intelligence (aql) of the most intelligent people!

Should I add something more..? Yes? You want me to? Then listen!

Oho! There is a saying in Urdu:

The crafty crow eats faeces.

The crow is a very crafty bird, very clever. If a crow is sitting on a fence, and you bend down, it immediately flies away - it has anticipated your picking up a stone to hurl at it. See just how clever it is! However, despite this cleverness it eats faeces!

We can deduce, therefore, an inverse relationship between intelligence and cleverness: the greater the cunning, scheming and craftiness, the less the intelligence. And vice versa: the greater the intelligence (aql), the less craftiness there is, or there is a complete absence of craftiness.

Women, therefore, being nuqsane aql (deficient in intelligence), will be proportionately very hushyar (clever).

In the same way, if any male has this quality of craftiness, he too will have a deficiency in his intellect (aql).

So, Allah Taala has attached to this male a female, created with such a nature. This female being his wife.

Therefore, in your home if your wife makes such teri teri statements, such absurd statements, that place a burden on your temperament, what cause is there for you to show anger? Why be amazed? You knew from beforehand! So, why did you get married?

You already knew beforehand what type of disposition a woman has. You wished to be attached to her, make a home with her, knowing that by nature she was going to make such statements. Therefore, it is expected that you would have come prepared - prepared with the qualities of hilm, of burdabari (forbearance), able to bear the burden of her statements.

She being such, therefore there is no cause for feeling grieved, no cause for having takleef, no cause for being amazed. The question then follows: What cause is there for anger? Therefore, no anger (ghussah)!

Do you understand?
This is the manner in which the quality of hilm and burdabari of Allah Taala should come into this insan mumin.

The ahlullah show this shan - the real ahlullah, the members of the household of Allah Taala, show this nobility and dignity - that whatever statements are uttered by the wife, they tolerate them. Make no mistake, the wife will utter such such things that are beyond ones imagination!

29.ADVICE ON GETTING MARRIED

Are you married? No?
All the more reason for you to listen very attentively! It is a good thing that

these matters are being discussed. Insha-allah taala, you will make a good home.

Firstly, look carefully before you get married. Find out about the family and the girls background. Find out about her manners and character.

Do not look just at the eyes, whether she has big, beautiful eyes or not! How will you know whether her heart is big or small? I am pointing this out because youngsters look merely at the face: What are her eyes like? What is her complexion like? But completely unconcerned about what her inside is like! Habits will remain forever, but youthful colour and complexion will not remain forever. Just see what happens after she has borne a few children, or after an illness lasting some months - that youthful face quickly fades away. As for habits? They remain forever.

I am pointing out these matters to the youngsters because this is an age full of fitnah.

In Europe, England, Africa and other countries the boy and girl insist on seeing each other first. This is not so here. The special shan of this province (U.P) is that the parents arrange the marriage. But this is changing even here. People from outside are coming to stay here. Also, girls are now being given an education. The result is that they have become more teri! By receiving western education girls have become more bent! Now they are even more teri!

Take karela. It is a very bitter vegetable. You now cross it with neem, another bitter plant. The result will be that now you will have karela that are even more bitter!

So too, the female. She is bitter by nature, and now that she is educated,
this crossing has made her more bitter!
To cope with her now is even more difficult!

I insist on going on a holiday, she is adamant. You and I are incompatible, molvi saheb. Why are you keeping me here in a prison?

Mind you, she now calls pardah a prison!
Come to think of it, is it not better to confine some people to a prison or to an asylum, rather than letting them out?
Women are best kept in the house, rather than let out, or else they will get wings and fly away! Once they set their feet outside, you will not get them back!

The European style is for the boy and girl to see one another before getting married. I want to see first! is what is insisted on.
Idiot, what are you going to see? Oh, very well, very well, if you insist.
Arrangements are made to go and have a cup of tea. The girl is handed the tray to serve the guests, so that the boy has an opportunity to see her. For a few fleeting seconds his eyes fall on her before she disappears again.
What has he seen in those few seconds? He has had no time to note the colour of her eyes, or the shape of her nose, or her complexion. Yes, he has some vague perception that she appears to be pretty. What an achievement!

So, on the third day of the marriage, he has given her talaq!

If he had made nikah to her, satisfied at seeing her, why the talaq?
The reason is that he had merely seen her countenance and not her habits. After marriage he is now face to face with her habits. Appearance (surat) is a passing thing, behaviour and character (seerat) are for always.

These comments are made incidentally.
We were discussing the wife. If she makes teri statements, if she speaks insolently, if she says things contrary to ones temperament, there is no cause for surprise. And if there is no cause for amazement, then there is no cause for grief. And if there is no cause for grief, then there is no cause for ghussah (anger)! Then, insha-allah taala, there will be life-long compatibility, because you will remind yourself all the time, Allah Taala has created her such for our islah, from the rib of the left side, teri!.
Therefore, the real ahlullah show a tremendous degree of hilm and burdabari towards such wives. The question of talaq does not arise.

30.QISSAH CQNCERNING HADHRAT UMAR FAROUQ (R.A.)
Have you heard of a person by the name of Hadhrat Umar Farouq (R.A.)? He was some nonentity, somebody insignificant? NO! He was somebody imposing, with a personality that was intimidating! So much so, that it comes in the Hadith shareef that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said,
"0 Umar! Whenever you are passing by, Shaitan runs away from you!

Bearing this in mind, listen carefully now, so that this qissah can come in use at the appropriate time, without you having to search around for solutions.

Ameerul-mumineen Hadhrat Umar Farouq (R.A.) used to patrol the city of Medinah some nights, in order to keep himself informed of the conditions of his fellow Muslims, both as far as their Deeni needs were concerned, as well as their dunyawi (worldly) needs.

One day, his wife enquired, Just where do you go to in the evenings?
Hadhrat Umar Farouq (R.A.) replied calmly, You are aware that, from Allah Taalas side, I have been made Ameerul-mumineen. I have the responsibility of looking after the safety and protection of the community, to its Deeni and dunyawi needs and necessities.
His wife retorted, All lies! What you have just said is a pack of lies!

Ask yourself: is this not enough to enrage anybody?
But this was not just anybody. Hadhrat Umar Farouq (R.A.) was one of those noble souls who were given the glad tidings in this world of being granted Jannat! Is it even remotely possible for such a person to tell lies? Yet, here is his wife openly accusing him of telling lies!

Still very calm, Hadhrat Umar Farouq (R.A.) asked, In what way am I lying?
His wife spoke accusingly, In this way: Yes, no doubt, you are going on your inspection tours, but you are deliberately going to those neighbourhoods where reside pretty young lasses, to feast your eyes on them!

Again, is this not a further, a second occasion for anger?

What did the allahwala Hadhrat Umar Farouq (R.A.) reply to this?

He said, This is only a figment of your imagination. Allah Taala knows very well.

Who spoke so mildly? Hadhrat Umar Farouq (R.A.), a person whose whip everyone feared! Yet, towards his wife he showed tremendous forbearance (burdabari).

Her harsh statements, firstly calling him a liar, and then slandering him, he bore gracefully, brushing them off by saying that it was a figment of her imagination and that Allah Taala knew very well.

Are you listening? Do you understand what it means to be an ahlullah? Do you understand what it means to be a kamil deendar Muslim? 0 ye salikoon! 0 ye talibane islah! 0 ye who have left your homes with a desire and a quest for islah! Understand well what islah is, how you should mould yourself, how you should live, how you should bring a change in your previous lifestyle to another mode, by continuously placing burdens on your tabiyet (temperament) - this being the purpose of your journey here!

0 ye talibane islah! 0 ye talibane tazkiyah! You should change the state of your nafs, haul it over from the left to the right!

Understand very well what an ahlullah is. Do not harbour the misconception that having performed your namaz and thats it, you are now a complete ahlullah!

Making namaz is no exceptional feat - like we partake of meals, so we offer namaz. What is so great about that? The real task, the heavier task, is to control your nafs, twenty-four hours of the day, inside and outside the house, and on top of it, in your relationship with your wife - that is an achievement! May Allah Taala protect us!
So, to what degree must the nafs not be killed! Complete annihilation of the nafs! The nafs has to be brought under complete control! This is a greater task!

It requires a great deal of wisdom to look after and nurture ones wife. It requires tremendous foresightedness, tact and insight. One has to chose the appropriate time to correct her, explaining to her with very carefully chosen words, using loving terms, in a pleasant and nice manner, in affectionate tones. From time to time read to her the kitabs of our buzurgs, so that a change may come into her.
This is the method. Do not react with ghussah upon ghussah. If you do, what then is the difference between the female and you, the male?

You should have utilised a well thought-out strategy to bring about a change in her. And changes do take place!

If it is possible that your islah can be made, cannot her islah be made as well? Definitely so!

You have heard of Rabiah-al-Basriah (R.A.)?
She was a woman. She became a mureedni of Hasan-al-Basri (R.A.) and took guidance from him. Just see what elevated stages she reached!

Yes, it is possible for her, a female, to reach the levels of the great ahlullah, even though, once in a while, once in a year, or once every two years, she may show some teri behaviour.

You may have attended a circus performance, where different animals - tigers, elephants, wolves, deer and goats - are put through their different acts.
In my young days, when I was still at school in Aligarh, I once attended such a circus performance.

After each animal has performed individually, in the grand finale, all the animals are gathered together. Tables and stools are placed in the middle, food is laid out separately for each animal, and then each animal goes and sits on its stool, and eats the food laid out for it.

The amazing thing about this whole scene is that the tiger does not bother about the wolf next to it; the wolf does not bother about the goat next to it; and so forth. Each animal is busy with its own allocated task. Just see how insan, by utilising a process of continuous teaching and training, has brought about such changes in these animals as to get them to behave contrary to their natural, instinctive, animal temperaments!
So, why not that insan who is female? Once the talab (desire/ thirst) comes into her, by a process of teaching and training, why can she not change? Why should the teri-ness not change? Why can she also not attain the heights of the ahlullah? Why can her habits not change?

Of course, provided that there is somebody prepared to take on this task! This person himself must first be prepared to take on a burden.
And if a female can change, and can turn from evil towards good, turn from sin to piety, is there any conceivable reason why such a change cannot come into a male?

This will happen, provided that, firstly, that the talab (desire/ thirst) is present, and, secondly, the person does not act on his own opinions and initiatives (apna zehen nah chalawe).

Look: the circus tiger and wolf did not act on their own opinions and initiatives, but submitted passively to the instructions of the trainer.

Similarly, the mureed should not act on his own opinions and initiatives, but should subjugate these to those of the sheikh.

Ponder again: if a females islah can be made, why should a males islah not be made? How can this be?
If it is so, and no islah is taking place, then it shows that there is no talab! His niyyet (intention) in coming to lie around here is corrupt!

When a talibe-sadiq has come here, and he observes the huququllah and the huququl-ibad, there is no question of not reforming!

When animals like the tiger and the wolf can be made to understand, and can be reformed, then why not this male insan?

We were saying, concerning the wife: Not immediately she does something teri, but at some other appropriate time, judging her mood, at night, explain very nicely

to her. Read some kitabs to her. Do this from time to time, but do not wage a crusade against her.

Then you will see, insha-allah taala, the rib that was bent (teri) becoming somewhat straightened as far as her habits are concerned.

From the qissah of Hadhrat Umar Farouq (R.A.) do you understand what it means to be an ahlullah, what it takes to be deendare-kamil?
This is achieved not merely by making namaz and then going to sleep. Despite his wifes most teri remarks, despite her most harsh words, he remained unflustered. He was burdabar!

That qissah concerned a Sahabi (R.A.), Hadhrat Umar Farouq (R.A.). Here follows another qissah.

31.QISSAS CONCERNING IMAM ABU HANIFAH (R.A.) - ONE.
You must have heard of Imam Abu Hanifah (R.A.). Whether you follow Imam Abu Hanifah (R.A.) or Imam Shafi (R.A.), or any of the other Imams, they were all ahlullah. They were all buzurgs.

There are several qissas concerning Imam Abu Hanifah (R.A.). This is but one: Imam-saheb - i.e. Imam Abu Hanifah (R.A.) - was returning home after having given his lessons. Along the way he encountered somebody who had great animosity towards him. (The ahlullah also have enemies, whose animosity has no basis whatsoever, but people develop hasad /jealousy), etc. for them.)

This person started following Imam-saheb, hurling a tirade of abuse at him. Many were the harsh and offensive words uttered by him, but Imam-saheb kept on walking. When Imam-saheb came to the door of, his house, he stopped and turned to address this person, This is the door to my house. I will not go in as yet. I will stand here and wait. Whatever you still wish to tell me, tell me. Because, were I to go in, whatever you still desire to say, good or bad, will still remain in your heart. So, I am placing myself here at your disposal - without hesitation, you may say whatever you wish, quite openly. Your heart should feel happy!

However, this person kept quiet. Now, when he was given the opportunity to continue his tirade, he kept silent. He then went away.

Yes! Making the heart of ones adversary happy! This is what is meant to be an ahlullah!

Nowadays, what do we see?
Just let anybody say a word out of place to him, and he starts a fight. Just see how good a Muslim is he! Yes... Say he is a Muslim. But what type of Musliin...?
This happens day and night.
Let a room-mate say something, an argument follows, then foul language, and then a fight. Thats it! An end to the friendship.

The purpose of having come here is to bring about a change, so that your condition on your return should be an improvement on what it was previously. Your behaviour towards your mates should show an improvement, so that they may also

comment in admiration, Oho! Where has he been? He was not like this before! Just look at what he has learnt and what he has brought back with him! This is being an alim! Mubarak!

You are now making tableegh by the pattern of your behaviour.

QISSAH NUMBER TWO

Imam-saheb. Another qissah about him:

It was one afternoon. At this latter period of Imam-sahebs life his body had become somewhat heavy, causing him some difficulty in moving around. Also, his house was situated on high ground, with a fair number of steps to climb to reach the entrance.

This particular afternoon Imam-saheb had just climbed up the steps and entered his house, and had just sat down on the charpai with the intention of lying down to rest, when somebody called out to him from the bottom of the steps:

I wish to ask you some masalah. Please come down.

Imam-saheb came down and asked, What is the masalah that you wish to know?

The person replied, Ofo! Just as you had reached the last two or three steps I forgot!

Imam-saheb said, It is of no consequence. When you remember, you may ask, and Imam-saheb went back up the stairs.

Just as Imam-saheb was about to lie down to rest, this person called out again, Ive remembered! Come down.

Imam-saheb climbed down again. This time, too, it was the same story: The person said, I had remembered, but just as you reached the last step, I forgot!

Sometimes it was the last step that Imam-saheb had reached, sometimes it was the third or fourth last step, but everytime it was the same story, that he had remembered but had forgotten again!

In this way he made Imam-saheb climb up and down six or seven times! Then finally, when Imam-saheb had climbed down and enquired, What is the masalah? this person replied, Yes! Yes! Now I remember!

Imam-saheb said, Go ahead and ask.

The person asked, What is the taste of faeces?

Let us pause for a moment. Did you hear? He wanted to know what faeces tasted like! Is this a masalah? Is this a question to put to anybody? How much trouble and inconvenience did he not put Imam-saheb to, to ask this?

However, with an even temperament (mustaqil mizaj), with steadfastness (istiqamat), with a firm stance (thabite-qadam), Imam-saheb responded very calmly, It depends. What type of faeces are you enquiring about - the taste of fresh faeces, or the taste of stale faeces?

The person said, Well... Both! Tell me the taste of fresh faeces and stale faeces.

Imam-saheb answered, "The taste of fresh faeces is sweet, whereas the taste of stale faeces is bitter.

(Listen carefully now!)

The person said, What, did you taste each of them?

Imam-saheb replied, There is no necessity for one to taste each in order to determine these qualities. There are some signs and indications which will equally lead us to this conclusion. I have noticed that flies tend to settle on freshly-passed faeces. Flies are attracted by sweetness. So, one can conclude that freshly-passed faeces taste sweet. Flies do not settle on stale faeces. Bitterness repels flies. So, again, one can conclude that stale faeces are bitter!

The person said, What you have stated is absolutely correct! Imam-saheb, in turn, asked him, Why do you say so?

The person explained, I knew the answers beforehand!

He explained further, We were a few people sitting together, having a discussion, and the question came up: In this present age, who is that person who is a sahebe-hilm?

We have explained previously what hilm is. These people wanted to know who is the most accomplished in the quality of hilm, of selflessness, of giving qurbani, of undergoing personal inconvenience for the sake of others.

It was our unanimous opinion that it was Imam Abu Hanifah. I came specifically to put you to the test, so that I could see for myself whether our unanimous opinion was correct or not!

Do you now understand what is kamale-deendari, kamale-darjah-imani? We had quoted just now:

Cleanliness and good character are among the stages of Iman.

31.SUMMARY AND DU'A

It is apparent that iman also has different levels, wherein is included husne khulq (good character).

You have heard in todays majlis about husne khulq, and the elevated stage it enjoys - husne khulq has a very high status when it comes to iman.

Nazafat has not been fully explained, but husne khulq has been explained in some detail, with illustrating qissas.

Iman, as we had mentioned, has different grades: third, second and first.

It is basic that one always tries for the highest level, the first grade, in our worldly affairs.

So, when it comes to levels of iman, why not attempt to attain the highest grade, the first grade? Iman is fundamental! It comes first! Here, why do you sit back content with second and third grades?

To re-iterate:

Iman has different levels. Husne khulq has an important role, a high status, in ones iman. You have heard what the definition of husne khulq is, and you have heard qissas illustrating some aspects of husne khulq.

Ahlullah - members of the household of Allah Taala! Husne khulq is compulsory in the ahlullah! An important quality constituting husne khulq is hilm. Selflessness (ithar), qurbani, to give preference to others, have all been explained.

May Allah Taala grant all of us - all Muslims in general, and the talibane ilm and the talibane tazkiyahe-nafs specifically - with increasing ikhlas, the taufeeq to attain the highest levels of iman, thereby decorating and embellishing us all by

means of husne khulq; and also the taufeeq to continually make dua for taufeeq.

Khuda hafez.

Chapter No.:

9

1.FOREWORD

Through the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala, and the barkat of our sheikh(R.A.), this ninth booklet is ready.

The majlis that has been translated in this issue was conducted way back in 1983 while Hadhrat (r.a.) was visiting South Africa. However, the topics discussed are as relevant today as they were at that time. This is a remarkable feature of Hadhrat's (r.a.) majalis - they remain "evergreen". Not only are relevant topics brought to our notice but, together with the discussion, certain underlying principles are also discussed, so that these majalis remain appropriate for all times. The reader should not, therefore, merely "enjoy" reading the different qissas, but he/she should also try to understand the underlying principles that are being enunciated.

That is why Hadhrat (r.a.) time and again asks: "Do you understand?" "Is my voice reaching you?" "Can you hear?" etc. It is not that the words or the qissas are not being heard or understood. Hadhrat
(r.a.) is actually drawing our attention to a specific point that is being made, an underlying principle that is being enunciated, a subtle aspect that is being placed in perspective. We are expected to take special note and remember the point that is being driven home at this particular juncture in connection with that particular qissah.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the taufiq arzani to continually benefit from Hadhrat's (r.a.) teachings. aAmin.
Dr. Ismaiel Mangera
[This is a translation of a majlis-e-khas held by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Masihullah Khan sahib (r.a.) during his visit to South Africa. Approximate date: January 1983. Venue: Lenasia, Johannesburg.]

2.ADL, FADHL AND ZULM

It was being stated at Navlakhi sahib's place that with Allah Ta'ala there is only 'adl (justice) and fadhl (bounty/ mercy/ graciousness). The question of zulm (injustice/ oppression) does not arise at all, not even remotely.

Why? The reason is that zulm is the manifestation of an enormous imperfection or defect of the highest degree. Whereas it is a fundamental part of iman, accepted and affirmed, that Zate Bari Ta'ala is free and pure of all manner of faults, defects

and weaknesses. Thus, there can be absolutely no question of zulm from Allah Ta'ala!

This much He has stated quite emphatically as well:
Verily... ("Inna" denotes an emphasis, denoting that "there is absolutely no doubt in the matter".)...Allah does not cause even an atom of zulm. S.4 A.40

So, either there is 'adl or there is fadhl.

With the mu'min Zate Bari Ta'ala's dealings are based absolutely and completely on fadhl (bounty/ mercy/ graciousness). The question of mere 'adl (justice) does not arise at all.

Is my voice reaching you? Or should I speak still louder?
To repeat: With the mu'min-bandah Zate Bari Ta'ala's dealings are based absolutely and completely on fadhl. The question of mere 'adl does not arise at all. 'Adl is the manner in which Allah Ta'ala deals with the kuffar (non-Muslims). This state exists while we are in this world as well as when we will be in the akhirat (hereafter).

If any difficulty befalls a mu'min, whether the difficulty relates to his physical body (jan) or to his wealth (mal) or his honour (abru), it may appear externally to be a difficulty - from appearances it may look like an upset - in reality it is not a difficulty or upset, provided that he accepts the problem in the context of his iman and his connection with Allah Ta'ala

If an illness befalls the mu'min, it is His fadhl.

If some material loss occurs, that is also His fadhl.

If some incident occurs that causes dishonour or disgrace, that is also His fadhl!

3.PRESENT, PAST AND FUTURE

This needs some explanation. Take the case of a neglectful mu'min:

As for the present, he is enjoying his position. He continues to live in a state which is contrary to the wishes of Zate Bari Ta'ala, with no concern for the state he is in.

As for the past, he is unconcerned about that also: As for that period that has passed before the present moment, for whatever shortcomings he had, for whatever wrongs he had committed, he is unrepentant. He does not make taubah.

As for the future? He dos not let his gaze fall there. He should have certain basic beliefs as far as the future is concerned, like the acceptance of Qiyamat, and the fear (khauf) that this belief should generate and, having developed this fear, that he should stop those actions which are contrary to the wishes of Allah Ta'ala, but he does not stop.

4.IMAN AND ISLAM

So, there is no doubt as far as his iman is concerned but there is a weakness as far as his Islam is concerned. The reason is that iman is connected to tasdiq (attestation), whereas Islam is connected to a'mal (deeds) and akhlaq (qualities in a personality). And Zate Bari Ta'ala has no desire that any mu'min should go into Dozig (Hell).

Do you understand? To repeat: Haq Ta'ala does not wish that any mu'min should go into Dozig.

But if any mu'min himself or herself desires to go into Dozig, what then? Then Allah Ta'ala will endorse his wish: Very well, you shall be sent there!

The mu'min's desire may not be verbal but he knows that there are certain actions and activities, certain statements and conversations, certain states and conditions, all of which Haq Ta'ala has shown quite clearly, will be a cause for him to go into Dozig. Despite this, he is not prepared to stop himself from these, then it is as if he is saying, "These calamities may throw me into Dozig but here and now I am going to enjoy myself!" So, he goes ahead and he gambles, he drinks alcohol, he commits zina, he steals, he deceives and he commits fraud!

These sinful activities are connected to "Islamiat" and not "imaniat". May Allah Ta'ala safeguard and maintain our iman, your iman, and the iman of all Muslims till our last breath. amin. Then there will be nothing but the uttermost victory, insha-Allah ta'ala.

To continue:
Allah Ta'ala has no desire to send any mu'min to Dozig (Hell). And how is it possible that he should wish to do so?

Once Raslullah's (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) majlis-sharif was in progress. The Sahaba (r.a.) were sitting in attendance. A woman was approaching. (At that stage the complete set of regulations concerning the observation of purdah had not been revealed as yet.) The woman was carrying her suckling infant in her arms and the

infant was being suckled on her breast as she walked. Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) said, "Do you see that woman, how lovingly she is clutching her infant and feeding the infant on her breast? Do you observe?" The Sahaba (r.a.) replied, "O Raslullah!" (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) "Yes, we do observe!"

5.DURUD SHARIF

Let us digress for a moment: If, during the course of a discourse (majlis) the honoured name of Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) is taken, then it is fardh (compulsory) to recite durud sharif once. If the honoured name of Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) is repeated and his name is mentioned time and again, then to recite durud sharif on every occasion is mustahab (meritorious). This applies even if it is not a majlis and an individual by himself takes the name of Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam). So, at least once one should recite durud sharif:

The durud sharif that this servant has just recited is the very one that Hadhratwala (Hadhrat Thanwi sahib(R.A.) used to recite, commenting, "This is the durud sharif I am in the habit of reciting." It made me extremely happy because I also used to read this durud sharif.

In the ma'mulats of the auliya-Allah, of the ahlullah, the wird, the zikr that is recited all the time finally settles down to the recitation of durud sharif. They have recited an excessive amount of zikr, yet finally they settle on reciting durud sharif.

What is the reason? I have to explain this by asking a question:

Dear sahib! If a person is wearing clothes that are filthy and, on top of it, the

clothes are emitting a bad odour, will one place ittar on such clothes? Quite rightly, the answer is: No! Only after the clothes are washed and ironed very well and the person has made ghusl, as on Fridays and the day of Eid - or some shower and change their clothes daily - then only is ittar applied. So, first comes the cleansing and washing, then the application of ittar.

6.ISTIGFAR (REPENTANCE)

In a like manner, other tasbihs (specific zikrs) may be recited, well and good. The tasbih of istigfar (repentance) is one such tasbih that is recited regularly. This tasbih cleanses the dirt - i.e. sins - within. One should never be neglectful of this tasbih.

Allah Ta'ala made even the mala'ekah (angels) recite istigfar once. This transpired as follows: When Allah Ta'ala was about to create Hadhrat Adam (A.S.) the mala'ekah were perturbed and said, "O Allah! You wish to create Man, whereas he will shed blood..."

They said, "Wilt Thou place therein one who will do harm therein and will shed blood, while we, we hymn Thy praise and sanctify Thee?" S.2 A.30

That is to say, "We are Your servants. If You have any other work, we are ever prepared to serve You. Show us any other task and we will carry it out." Allah Ta'ala replied,

Surely I know what ye know not.

Allah Ta'ala knew the wisdom of His action. The mala'ekah were suddenly made

aware that they had erred in raising a query and they immediately felt contrite at their indiscretion, at their rashness. They pleaded to be forgiven.

"Very well. You have not committed any sin - you have not acted contrary to any Order of Mine. However, you had made certain statements, thereby being involved in an indiscretion, of which you are now aware and of which you are now contrite. This is a very high, a very elevated angelic quality. Go and perform wudhu(ablution)."

The first instance that any creation performed wudhu was on this occasion when the mala'ekah were ordered to perform wudhu. This information forms part of ancient historical relevance and a lot of importance is laid on historically relevant events. The mala'ekah went ahead and performed wudhu. Allah Ta'ala then ordered them, "Recite istigfar, as follows:
I glorify You, O Allah! And recite Your praises. I testify that there is no god besides You. I seek Your forgiveness, and I turn to You in repentance.

O Rabb! Forgive and have mercy, for Thou art best of all who show mercy.

This should be read at least once. The reason for reciting istigfar is that even our ibadat (worship) is not free of shortcomings. Thus, insan musalman should not be negligent at any time as far as istigfar is concerned. Even after making salaam at the completion of namaz
(salat/ prayer) he should still recite istigfar.

To continue: Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) had drawn the attention of the Sahaba (r.a.) to the woman lovingly clutching her infant to her breast and

feeding it. Did she not love her child? The Sahaba (r.a.) replied, "Yes, O Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam)! She is showing extreme love for her child." Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) then said, "To a much, much, much greater extent does Zate Bari Ta'ala love a mu'min!"

That Zat (Being) that has instilled such a great degree of love for the infant into the heart of the mother, to what a greater degree will He not have love for the mu'min, who is His "child"? This being so one may ask: Does a loving father ever cause harm to come to his child knowingly? Even if he were to hit his child, is it his purpose that the child should be wilfully harmed? Of course not! It will be for the child's tarbiyet - for his character- training. So, the father's hitting his child for the sake of the child's tarbiyet - is it a mercy (rahmat) or is it tyranny (zulm)?

We are all agreed that it is a rahmat and not zulm, it is showing bounteousness and kindness (meherbani and fadhl), and not enmity (dushmani).

This is sufficient proof to show that it is unimaginable that Zate Bari Ta'ala, whose name is also "Mu'min" (this being one name from the Names and Attributes that He has) will cause any harm to his mu'min- bandah. With him He does not deal with 'adl even, but His dealings are based purely on fadhl.

Therefore, should any incident occur at any time contrary to one's temperament - and such incidents fall into three categories:

a) life and health (jan),

b) wealth (mal), and

c) honour (abru);

and one has iman within oneself, then one should never but never bring negative thoughts to mind concerning Zate Bari Ta'ala: one should never perceive it as zulm - then what would remain of one's iman? No. One should not even perceive it as 'adl. How should one perceive it? One should perceive it as fadhl.

And, hadhrat, when this concept is firmly embedded in the heart that this mu'min is being treated with fadhl, then the mu'min, irrespective of how great a sinner he may be, will never feel crushed. Yes, he may develop some grief in his heart as a natural, instinctive reaction, but he will not become demoralised. No. He will immediately turn his attention in the direction indicated. This is the shan of a mu'min - this is his noble and dignified status.

So, for a short while he will experience some grief. And grief he must experience. If he were not to experience any grief then on what occasion will he make sabr (develop patience/ steadfastness), and how will he attain the maqam (stage/ rank) of sabr?

7.THE MAQAM OF SABR

The maqam of sabr has three aspects to it:

1.To make sabr at the time of having to perform ibadat. For example: One's mood was such that

one had no desire to perform namaz. However,one's temperament (tabiyet) was kept in check and

namaz was performed. Whatever burden the tabiyet (temperament) felt, whatever distaste

he may have experienced, were completely ignored and namaz was performed.

This is termed sabr-alat-ta'at.

2.To make sabr when the tabiyet (temperament) inclines towards sin. For example: A pretty face passes by, the eyes become corrupt but Immediately sensibility prevails and he scolds himself, "What! Is Allah Ta'ala not watching you? Have you no shame? Do you have no khauf (fear) of Allah Ta'ala, that you will be standing in front of Him on the Day of Qiyamat? What answer will you give then?" With this awareness, heimmediately, angrily recites, "Laa howla...."1 and opposes the immoral inclination of the nafs. He has not given in to the nafs.

This is sabr at the time of impending sin. His tabiyet (temperament) was inclining towards sin, was being attracted towards sin. He opposed his nafs, and the nafs found it vexing and unpleasant, but he kept full control over his tabiyet. He maintained an even temperament - mustaqil mizaj!

This is termed sabr-anil-ma'siyet.

3.There is a third category as well: This is to make sabr when faced with some difficulty.

For example: Some incident has occurred contrary to one's tabiyet, causing

difficulty, harm or
grief, in connection with one's jan, mal or abru(life, wealth or honour). For instance, a child passes
away,or one's money or goods have been stolen, or one's honour has been besmirched.

When this happens the tabiyet is upset - it feels burdened, as if a heavy load has been placed on
it. However, immediately the understanding is there: "This is not from my side - I did not request
this difficulty. This is from that Zat (Being) that has created me. There is some wisdom in it. There
must be some good in it for me. It is to save me from some future harm. If my child were to have
survived I do not know how he would have behaved towards me - would he have brought me
comfort and happiness, or brought me grief? Would he have brought me honour, or disgrace?

If my daughter would have lived, I do not know if she would have been a cause for my dishonour,
or what could have happened!"

A qissah (incident/ episode) appears in the Qur'an sharif:

8.QISSAH OF HADHRAT MUSA AND HADHRAT KHIDR (A.S.)

After being ferried across a river in a boat - and not being charged a fee either -

Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) damaged the boat by making a hole in it. Quite shocked, Hadhrat Musa (a.s.) questioned Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.), "What have you done?" Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) replied, "I had told you from earlier on that you will not be able to stay with me. My actions are such that they will appear to you to be contrary to the shariat."

Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) was allocated to do certain duties - he carried out those duties which Allah Ta'ala had ordered him to carry out independently. This is termed "takwiniyet".

As Hadhrat Musa (a.s.) and Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) proceeded farther it so happened that they came across a child who was playing amongst other children. Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) went and grabbed him by the neck and killed him. This episode is narrated in the Qur'an sharif in Surah Khahf (The Cave. Surah 18. A 60-82). Hadhrat Musa (a.s.) was even more shocked than previously, "You have taken the life of this innocent, sinless child! What have you done?" Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) replied, "I had told you from earlier on that you and I are incompatible. You had said that you will bear patiently with me. I had said that you should not say anything, but this is the second time that you have spoken." Hadhrat Musa (a.s.) said, "Everything in three's. Grant me one more opportunity." They proceeded farther and came to a settlement. They came across a house with a wall leaning precariously, about to collapse. Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) placed his back against the wall and pushed it straight again. Hadhrat Musa (a.s.) blurted out, "What have you done? We came to this place absolutely famished, with no food with us to eat. The people of this settlement should have invited us for meals, seeing we are visitors."

Even if one person had invited them, the responsibility on the whole community would have been lifted - the fardhe-kifayah would have been fulfilled.

"However, they never even came to ask. And then you went to repair the wall, free-of-charge! If you wanted to fix the wall, you should have asked for a fee for your service." Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) said, "You had requested three opportunities, which you have received. It is now time for us to part ways. But before we part, let me relate the reasons underlying my actions: Firstly, my making a hole in the boat: The king who resides up-river from that place is a big tyrant. Whenever he and his men set out on the river they capture and confiscate any sound and sea-worthy vessel they can lay their hands on. The owner would have lost his boat. By my making a hole in the boat the king would have seen that it is damaged and the owner would be saved from the tyranny of the king. After the king has passed the owner would repair the boat."

(There are many masa'el [rulings] involved here. However, I will not discuss them now as it will take up too much time.)

"Secondly, you felt that an innocent child had been killed. Yes? Well, this very child, as time goes on, would have been the cause for his pious parents to become kafir (non-Muslim). I had been commanded to end his life in order to protect the iman of his parents. Their love for him was so intense that they could have become kafir. Thirdly, the wall: The reason for my repairing it is the following: The owner, father of two young children, had buried a treasure under the wall before he had departed from this world. In his lifetime the father was a pious and saintly person, dindar and an Allah-wala. The wall was about to collapse. Had it collapsed, the

wealth belonging to the orphaned minor (na-baligh) children would have been exposed. The inhabitants of this place would have gathered and carried away whatever wealth each one could lay his hands on. I was commanded to repair the wall to prevent this so that the wealth will go to the rightful owners, the two orphaned brothers, when they become grown- ups. Now tell me, are there still objections? But what I have shown is that you and I are incompatible."

Do you understand?

Now, this making a hole in the boat, the killing of the child and the repairing of the wall - were these not acts of mercy? However, Hadhrat Musa (a.s.) is a Rasul and it is his duty to indicate what the shariat states, to give orders according to it and act according to it himself. The affairs of takwin were not in his hands. Therefore, any difficulty that comes to pass, either physically, or concerning wealth, or honour (jan, mal or abru) - affecting either oneself or one's relatives or friends - then all of these are fadhl from Haq Ta'ala, rahmat from Haq Ta'ala.

Once you have understood the above then you would be able to understand the following:

When the time for obedience (ta'at) and for ibadat arrives and the person's tabiyet (temperament) develops an aversion to these and he wishes to avoid these but, instead, he ignores his feelings completely and he takes courage in both hands and carries out that act of obedience (ta'at) and ibadat, he will attain three hundred darjas (elevation in spiritual status). The thawab (reward) for that ibadat he will

receive but, in addition, he will also attain three hundred darjas. These darjas are heavenly elevations. These three hundred darjas are attained on ta'at and ibadat.

What if, on the other hand, some act pertaining to sin presents itself and one stops oneself in time? As mentioned previously, his lustful gaze settles on some pretty, beautiful face and he has an inclination to stare with evil intent, with corrupt thoughts, but he immediately, forcefully stops himself. He feels ashamed. A sense of haya (modesty) engulfs him, khauf (fear) of Allah Ta'ala overwhelms him. He restrains himself. This person will attain six hundred darjas! Just think - on performing ibadat he attains three hundred darjas, but on abstaining from sin he attains six hundred darjas!

Why? The reason is that the degree of force and toil required to perform ibadat is not as great as the degree of force and toil required to curtail the desires and perversity of the nafs.

Now, (Allah forbid!) take it that somebody encounters events contrary to his tabiyet (temperament) - there is loss of health or loss of wealth or loss of honour. He did not wish these difficulties on himself but these difficulties came on a gair-ikhtiyari (involitional) basis. But he now makes sabr - he swallows the bitter-aloe tasting draught of sabr as if it was sweet- tasting sharbat. He undergoes emotional suffering - heartache and grief have to be experienced, otherwise what is there to make sabr on? And how will one attain the maqam (stage/ rank) of sabr? Bear in mind that the maqam of sabr in ibadat has the value of three hundred darjas; the maqam of sabr at abstaining from sin has the value of six hundred darjas; and the

maqam of sabr at the time of difficulty - when some loss occurs with regard to life, wealth or honour (jan, mal or abru) and one keeps silent and tranquil and one neither brings any complaint to one's lips nor does one harbour any ill-feelings in the heart - then the value to such sabr is nine hundred darjas!

Just imagine! Nine hundred darjas! This is in addition to receiving whatever thawab (reward) that is due to him on being confronted with these difficulties, provided that he dies with iman. Is this not fadhl and rahmat?

9.QISSAH BY IMAM GHAZALI (R.A.)

Imam Ghazali (r.a.) has written a qissah:

You may have heard of people residing in remote rural areas and whose means of earning consist of going to the towns and habitations, buying grain, etc., and then selling these elsewhere. Their permanent places of residence remain these out-of-the-way wildernesses.

Imam Ghazali (r.a.) writes a qissah of one such group of people who lived in a few houses in some wilderness. Each household possessed a dog, a cock and a donkey. The donkey was there to transport trading goods from one area to another to sell these goods there. The dog was there to protect the household from thieves, etc. The cock would crow early in the morning and the people in the house would come to know that it was nearly dawn and they would rouse from sleep. Each house in the area had these three animals.

There was a buzurg (pious, saintly person) also living in one of the houses with his wife. He also possessed these three animals. One day a wolf came and killed the

donkey.

The wife commented drily to her husband, "You see that? The donkey is dead! Now, how are you going to go about to earn a living? Others will go out to do their buying and selling, and enjoy themselves! But your donkey is dead!" The husband merely said, "Alhamdulillah!" This enraged the wife even more. After all, is she not a woman? "Wah! The donkey is gone and with it our livelihood and all you can say is, 'Alhamdulillah!'" The husband calmly repeated, "Alhamdulillah!"

The next day when the buzurg came home he found that the dog had suddenly died. His wife confronted him, remarking sarcastically, "Say again 'Alhamdulillah!' - the dog has died! The houses of the others will be protected, but your house will be looted! Yes, say it, say 'Alhamdulillah'" The husband was unperturbed by her sarcasm. He calmly said, "Alhamdulillah!"

On the third day a fox came and carried the cock away. The wife said, "See what good your 'Alhamdulillah!' has brought you - the cock is gone! Now you can sleep till late in the mornings! Everybody else will be getting up early and will be setting out for their work, and earning good profits in their trading - while you will be still fast asleep! Yes, the cock is also dead." The husband merely said, "Alhamdulillah!" She carried on but each time he would respond by saying simply "Alhamdulillah!"

On the fourth day they really got up late, seeing that the cock was not there to wake them up by its crowing. The wife started again, "I had warned you that this would happen! All you could do was say 'Alhamdulillah!'. Everybody has gone to

work by now and you got up only now." The husband was his normal cool and calm self, and he consoled his wife, "Dear wife! It is nothing to be upset about. Alhamdulillah!"

The husband got up, made his preparations - wudhu, namaz, etc. - and then headed for the door. He opened the door, stepped out and...stopped dead in his tracks! "That is most unusual - the neighbour's front door is open. And what is that? His dog is lying dead outside!" As he entered their gate to investigate there was no evidence of the cock. When he entered the house he found that all those dwelling in the house were lying dead! All the members of the household had been slain!

As he wandered from house to house, he came across the same scene - the dogs and cocks either killed or missing, and none of the inhabitants alive! The husband went back to his house and told the wife, "See here! Alhamdulillah! Come with me and have a look!" He took her to all the houses to witness the tragedies. "Are the dogs alive? Are the cocks alive? Are any of the people alive?" he asked her. "Hai! What happened?" she asked.

He explained to her, "This is why I said Alhamdulillah! At our gate there was no dog. In our yard there was neither a cock nor a donkey. The thieves must have come at night to all the houses, saw signs of these animals and knew that the houses were inhabited. At each place they killed the animals, entered the houses and killed those in the houses and took away all their wealth. They must have come to our house as well but there was no dog, no cock and no donkey, as at the

other houses. Obviously, they thought that our house was deserted. What was to be gained from coming inside?"

This qissah appears in Imam Ghazali's (r.a.) writings.

Do you understand?

So, the dog dying, the cock dying and the donkey dying - were these calamities or were they acts of rahmat? Obviously, these were acts of mercy. Kash! Would it not be wonderful if we mu'minin being mu'min, should understand such affairs from Allah Ta'ala to be acts of fadhl for us!

So, whatever events occur contrary to one's tabiyet will cause grief - grief that is temporary. Such grief will occur and should occur, otherwise how will one attain the maqam of sabr?

10.SABR AND SHUKR

Do you understand? Perhaps my voice is not reaching you. You are not falling asleep by any chance? No? Very good! Alhamdulillah!

There are only two possible situations one can encounter while existing in this world:

Events that occur are either agreeable and in harmony with one's tabiyet; or the opposite - events are contrary and in disharmony with one's tabiyet. There is no third possibility.

In the first instance the tabiyet desires a certain event to occur in a certain way and it happens that way.

In the second instance the tabiyet desires a certain event to occur in a certain way

and the opposite happens.
So, events occur in accordance to one's tabiyet, or contrary to it. When events take place in accordance to one's tabiyet, this is an occasion for shukr (gratitude). When one makes shukr Allah Ta'ala states:
If ye give thanks, I will grant you more. S.14 A.7

Also, concerning shukr, Zate Bari Ta'ala states at another place in the Qur'an sharif, something very beautiful, something brimming with muhabbat:
What will Allah Ta'ala gain (do) by punishing you. Become mu'min bandas (bondsmen) and continue making shukr. S.4 A.147

By punishing you will Allah Ta'ala's honour and dignity increase? Allah Ta'ala will remain as He is. What a beautiful statement!

So, if any event takes place in accordance with one's tabiyet say, "Alhamdulillah!" Make shukr. And if any event takes place contrary to one's tabiyet, make sabr - the virtues and stages of which have been outlined above.
Verily, Allah is with those who make sabr. S.2 A.153

When any occurrence takes place contrary to one's tabiyet one should display the quality of sabr. Thereafter one should perform ibadat:
O ye who believe! Seek help by making sabr and salaat. S.2 A.153
It is apparent that what takes precedence is correcting one's batin (inner self) and that the performance of zahiri good deeds (amelus-salihat) comes afterwards.

Do you understand?

If a person has not attained the akhlaqe-fadhilah (praiseworthy qualities) - amongst which sabr enjoys a very high position - then, hadhrat, even this person's ibadat will not be performed properly and carefully. Even if he were to make ibadat, there would be no constancy - that ibadat would be performed sometimes and sometimes he would leave it. Because of an imperfection in his akhlaq (character), this would be the effect.

Do you understand? Are these topics not of use? Having understood these, does your tabiyet not feel lighter? These topics should settle firmly in the heart for future reference.

So, the mu'min insan can never be free of these two qualities - sabr and shukr. And remember, in every situation Allah Ta'ala deals with His mu'min bandah with fadhl upon fadhl. The question of mere 'adl (justice) does not arise at all.

11.TAQWA AND TAWADHU

That is why it is necessary to be diligent and take care of two features: one is taqwa, and the other is tawadhu.

Taqwa is the following: One does not do anything contrary to the orders of Allah Ta'ala.

O you who believe! Be fearful of (and take the necessary precautions and save yourselves from) contravening the Orders of Allah Ta'ala.

Tawadhu is the following: At no time should you harbour any contempt in your heart for anybody.

Just see the tawadhu and abdiyet of Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam).

Allahu- akbar! The quality of his humility, his humbleness, his self-effacement is legendary.

12.NUR AND FAIZ

Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) is nur upon nur! In reality, Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) was nur (spiritual light) from his very inception. It was for our ta'lim (teaching and training) and to act as an example and a model for us that Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) was sent.

By the taufiq of Allah Ta'ala a thought has come to mind - listen carefully: Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) is undoubtedly nur. However, there is more to it than that. Actually Zate Bari Ta'ala desired that through Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) we should attain some faiz (spiritual bounty) - faiz-e-'ilmi and faiz amali (in knowledge and deeds). However, faiz cannot be attained without some physical component being attached to that metaphysical nur. Nur does not express itself in words. Just like the sun and the moon: despite emitting light, they do not utter words. Thus, Zate Bari Ta'ala sent that nur which he had created, into this world, clothing it with a physical body - a body that was the best, more beautiful and handsome than any other creation - and that this embodiment of nur should transmit to us faiz- e-'ilmi and faiz-e-amali.

This is our aqidah (belief). To repeat: Zate Bari Ta'ala clothed that nur which He had created, with a physical body in order that we may attain faiz-e-'ilmi and faiz-e-amali through the person of Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam). Thus, do we not subscribe to this concept that Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) is

nur? Has anybody denied it? We subscribe to it with a great deal of charm and beauty.

Once that nur had been blessed with a physical body, it is quite obvious that all those matters pertaining to a physical body will also apply to Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam): The need to eat and drink; a family life; occurrences of happy events and also sad events; physical tiredness; illness; etc. All these pertain to a physical body and all these were experienced by Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam). Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) fell ill; he grieved at times; tears were seen falling from his eyes; he married as well; he had children; etc.

Such faiz cannot become manifest by pure nur on its own. If it were possible, then the mala'ekah (angels) were sufficient as they are created from and exist as nur, and it would not have been necessary to create the ambiya (A.S.) in human form. Yes, the mala'ekah would have sufficed. However, we are unable to attain faiz from the mala'ekah. For example: If the mala'ekah were to order us, "Keep continuous rozas!" we would never have been able to carry out this order. We would have complained, "We are unable to." "Whyever not?" "Because we suffer from hunger," we would have replied. "Hunger? Hunger? What is this 'hunger' that you speak about?" How do the mala'ekah know what hunger is? They have never experienced hunger.

Another example: They would have instructed us, "Stay awake the whole night in ibadat!" We would have said, "We cannot stay awake the whole night." "Why can

you not?" "We get tired," we would have replied. "Tired? Tired? What is 'tired'?" The mala'ekah have never experienced tiredness.

A human being will experience these physical conditions. So, Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam), being nیr that is embodied, felt the effects of all those conditions which a physical body is affected by.

13.JINN

Take the Jinn. They have the power to adopt different physical forms. Whatever form a Jinn adopts, that Jinn will then manifest the effects of the particular form it has adopted. Now, even amongst the Jinn one finds that they have different social classes - upper classes of Jinn and lower classes of Jinn. Those Jinn from a low class will adopt the form of a low class of animal when they wish to adopt a physical form. Whereas those Jinn who belong to the upper classes will not adopt the forms of the lower classes of animal like the cat, the mouse, the snake, etc. They will adopt the form of the more "noble" or "royal" animals. Jinn are capable of changing their forms because of their original refined nature.

A human being as well, were he to refine the physical constituents of his body by means of riyadhat (spiritual exercises) to a level of extreme exquisiteness he may, if he so wishes, at any given moment change the form of his body from its original to another. The original human figure may then even be visible as several other human figures. However, the laws of the shariat will still be incumbent on the original elemental human figure, even though there may be other separate figures visible.

14.CHANGING FORMS: A QISSAH

This is possible that one figure transforms itself into a separate figure. Hadhratwala (r.a.) related the following qissah:

A buzurg went to make wudhu. The namaz had already started. The buzurg was a bit slow in making his wudhu. By the time the namaz had ended he had not finished making his wudhu. The imam-sahib, who was an alim, had taken note of this. He addressed the buzurg, "Janab, if you had been quick with your wudhu and had joined the jama't (congregation) in namaz, what a good thing would it not have been! As it is, you have missed your namaz with jama't." The buzurg replied, "But do you not see? I am making namaz!" Now, when the imam-sahib turned to look at the saff he saw, quite true, the figure of the buzurg making namaz! The imam-sahib, however, was an alim. He addressed the buzurg, "Janab, forgive me, but this figure making namaz is your projected image (jissam mithali), it is not your original body (jissam unsuri), and the namaz that is fardh is fardh on your original body, the one created from sand." The buzurg, realising his error, admitted to it. "I have erred. Please forgive me. I make taubah. I shall not do so again in future."

Do you see how important it is to have ' ilm (Dini knowledge)? Otherwise, as happened to the buzurg, one can fall into error.

Coming back to the point made earlier: The body can change its form. A human being, by undertaking certain special spiritual exercises (riyadhat) - mind you, not by mujahadah (striving) but by riyadhat - can develop a certain refinement and

exquisiteness, which will then manifest in certain extraordinary characteristics. Such as with Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.).

15.SHAH HADHRAT ABDUL QUDDUS (R.A.) AND THE JOGI

Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) was not born in Gangoh, but hailed originally from a settlement in the district of Ambalah. In the age in which he lived the Hindu Jogis held tremendous sway and power over the populace. These Jogis undertook tremendous self-disciplinary exercises which resulted in the human body exhibiting some amazing characteristics. Now, Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) came to know (while still in Ambalah) of a certain Hindu Jogi. The Jogi lived in the district of Saharanpur in the village of Gangoh and he was leading the Muslims astray through a display of the amazing feats that he commanded..

Hadhrat Maulana Thanwi (r.a.). related this qissah to us. Why? So that we may safeguard our iman and avoid being led astray by those who want to lead us astray.

Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) came to Gangoh. He enquired from the people as to the whereabouts of this Jogi. The people told him that the Jogi did not stay in the village, but lived somewhere away from there, in the wilderness. Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) went to the area he was directed to and came upon a small bungalow made of brick and mud. Trying to find the entrance, he went around all four sides but found no door! The structure had four walls but no door was to be seen!

Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) noticed a person sitting nearby. He went up to him and asked, "Are you the Jogi residing here?" This person replied,

"No. I am merely his disciple." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) asked, "Then, where is your guru?" The disciple replied, "He is in that bungalow." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) asked in amazement, "In that bungalow? But I have just been right around it but I do not see any sign of a door on any of the four sides! From where does he enter and where does he leave from?" The disciple replied, "Do you see that wall? It has a small skylight towards the top. He enters and leaves through that." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) said, "Ofo! He actually goes in through that small hole and goes out from it as well? Very well. We will do the same."

With a nimble leap Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) reached the small skylight, went through it and alighted in the room inside. Truly, the Jogi was in the room, but he was in such deep meditation that he was not aware of the visitor having entered. Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) sat on one side and waited.

When the Jogi finally came out of his meditation then only did he become aware of another person sitting in his room - a stranger and, from his appearance, not belonging to his, the Jogi's, religion. "Who are you?" he asked. "From my appearance, who do I look like?" "You appear to be a Muslim." "I am a Muslim," replied Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.). The Jogi asked, "How did you enter?" "In the same way that you entered." "Through that niche in the wall?" "Through the very same!"

The Jogi realised that this was no ordinary person but somebody of a high status. He came straight to the point: "Janab, I understand very well your challenge. But let me put it to you that until you do not find out and adopt our ways and you do not make me your teacher in this, you will never reach the stage of kamal (perfection)." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) asked, "May I ask, what is the highest point of perfection that you have reached?" The Jogi replied, "The highest point of perfection is this that while I sit here I can transform myself into a pool of water." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) said, "Very well. Prove it to me."

The Jogi, while sitting, suddenly turned into a pool of water. Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) went over, took some of the Jogi's clothes and dipped these in the pool of water. These clothes he kept on one side. The Jogi transformed himself back to his original physical body.

Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) said, "Truly, we have seen how you transformed yourself into water. Very well, we shall also transform ourselves into water. However, the request I have is that you should dip some of my clothes in the water and keep them on one side." The Jogi said, "I'll do that."

Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) also, while sitting, transformed himself into a pool of water. The Jogi took some of Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi's (r.a.) clothes, dipped them in the pool of water and set them aside. Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) reverted back to his original physical body. The contest appeared to be equal. But was it?

Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) addressed the Jogi: "Let us evaluate. You entered through the niche in the wall and so did I." "Agreed" "You then showed me the highest feat you were capable of - transforming yourself into a pool of water. I also did the same." "Agreed." "May I ask, did you wet my clothes in the pool of water as I had requested?" "Yes, I did." "Where have you placed them?" "They are over here."Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) then said, "I did the same with your clothes and these are your clothes which I have kept on one side. Now, first smell your clothes dipped in your water and then you smell my clothes dipped in my water, and then you give your verdict."

The Jogi did as instructed and went ahead and smelled both sets of clothing. He then said - remember that he had been through a process of self-discipline, consequently telling lies was inconceivable - "I have smelled both sets of clothes. From my clothes I perceive a malodour being emitted. And from your clothes I perceive a sweet fragrance being emitted." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) said, "Well, then make your judgment."

The Jogi said, "I have already made my judgment. It was my belief that you would not achieve perfection (kamal) until you had not acquired what I possess. But, it is just the opposite: for me to attain perfection I have to acquire what you possess. Therefore, please enter me into your religion." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) told him, "Recite the Kalimah Tayyibah:

There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, and Muhammed (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) is the Messenger (Rasul) of Allah.

The Jogi recited the Kalimah Tayyibah with a sincere heart and brought iman. Most of his disciples did the same. This is the manner in which iman spread in the early times.

To continue: I was saying that when nur is clothed in a physical human body, the physical body will show the traits of a human body. We consider Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) to be nur-run-ala-nur (light upon light). The view that is held that we do not consider Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) to be nur, is false.

Brothers, do you understand, or not yet?

The point to be emphasised is this that our hadharat akabir - those pious elders who lived before us - have always considered the feats acquired through riyadhat to be mere sport. As a result they have always remained safe and protected.

In our silsilah, which flows in its latter part through Hadhrat Haji Imdadullah sahib (r.a.), the greatest of precautions have been taken in the matter of ittiba'-e-sunnat - following the sunnat. Become absolute dust - annihilate yourself - and let the utmost degree of humility come into you.

16.THE HUMILITY OF RASULULLAH (SALLALLAAHU ALAIYHI WASSALLAM)

Just see how Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) very occasionally used to take water in his cupped hand from the very pond in which the Sahaba (r.a.) used to make wudhu and drink it. Knowing very well that all sorts of hands and feet were washed in the pond, yet Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) used to

drink the water. Some Sahaba (r.a.) enquired from Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam), "O Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam)! Why do you do this? We see that you very occasionally drink water from this pond. What is the reason for this?" Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) replied, "Many hands of the mu'minin have been dipped in it. It would not be remarkable that there would be an increase in my nur-e-iman by my drinking with cupped hands from it!" Can you gauge the degree of humility and humbleness of Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam)?

In yesterday's majlis or in the one held the day before, I narrated the incident where a person had approached Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) and said, "You have beaten me!" Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) responded, "You beat me (in requital)!" Do you see the humility? Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) did not query, "When did I hit you? What was the occasion? What was the reason? Where were you standing? Etc." No! No! It was a Muslim making a certain statement, so he must be speaking the truth. Why would a Muslim tell a lie? iman and lies do not go together, cannot co-exist, so why would he tell lies?

Our pious predecessors have also given us the ta'lim that among the bandah (bondsmen) there should be absolutely no violation of the rights of another bandah. Take full and complete precautions against this happening. And ittiba'-e-sunnat (complete obedience to the sunnat) - always consider this. That is why our pious predecessors abstained from listening to qawali.

17.SAMA

Now that this topic has come to my lips listen carefully. Are you listening? Yes? Very good. Keep on paying attention and ponder! Shukr that an excellent topic has cropped up!

To continue: Ittiba'-e-sunnat. This is why our hadharat did not direct their attention towards qawali. When referring to qawali, what qawali am I speaking about? I am referring to what was originally known as "sama'". It is only recently that the word "qawali" has being used, quite erroneously, in referring to sama'. There are major differences between the two. The qawal (singer) of these days is a "galla-phar" (one who shrieks). He has no concept of the art and science of music.

18.MIANJI NUR-MUHAMMED (R.A.) AND QAWALI

A qawal of that time approached our par-dada pir (fourth generation upwards in the silsilah), Mianji Nىr-Muhammed Jinjani (r.a.) - whose khalifah was Haji Imdadullah (r.a.) mentioned previously - and put the request to him, "Hadhrat, it is my heart's desire that you should listen to me. You are also in the Chistiyah-Saberiyah silsilah, and some of the ahlullah belonging to the Chistiyah have listened to sama'. It is my heart's desire that you listen to some renderings by myself." Our par-dada pir, Mianji Nur-Muhammed (r.a.) replied, "Bhai, what can I do? My heart also wishes to listen. The fact is that people occasionally ask me to be the imam and, therefore, I have to refuse."

Do you see the level of taqwa, the depth of it?

19.RULES GOVERNING SAMA' (QAWALI)

What was the sama' of those times - what is nowadays confused with present-day qawali? Listen very carefully now.

The sama' of those days had very stringent conditions. What were these? As follows:

1. The one rendering the sama' should also be a "sahibe-hal".
2. The content of what he renders, the poetry, should be within the limits of the shariat.
3. The one rendering the sama' should not be a female and should not be a youth at the prepubertal age, one without a beard (i.e. neither imrat nor amrad).
4. No musical instruments should be used - no tabla, no sarangi, no harmonium, no guitar.
5. If there is clapping of the hands, this should NOT be in accordance with the rules of music (rhythm, cadence, etc.)

Is my voice reaching you? Are you giving this proper thought? These were the stringent conditions applied by those listening to sama'!

Applying these strict conditions, two of our predecessors have listened to sama' somewhat. One was Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) and the other was Hadhrat Nizamuddin Sultanji Dehelvi (r.a.).

20.SAMA' & SHAH HADHRAT ABDUL QUDDUS GANGOHI (R.A.)

What was the condition of Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.)? He suffered from a condition called "hiddate-jismani" (fieriness in the body). The

severity of this heat was such that in the cold winter months an earthenware pot was left outside overnight so that he could bath daily with the icy-cold water in the early part of the morning to keep his body cool. This condition was such that if he did not listen to sama', his skin would peel from parts of his body and blood would ooze out. Listening to sama' was remedial - it was treatment for his hiddate-jismani.

We know that at times something that may be ordinarily na-ja'ez (impermissible) may be used as a remedy because of special circumstances. And if the "substance" is ja'ez (permissible), then?

Once, a muhtassib appeared in Gangoh. It was a period of monarchal rule and the muhtassib was a person appointed by the Royal Court to see that nobody is involved in activities contrary to the shariat. On his rounds the muhtassib visited Gangoh as well. He came to know that sama' was taking place at Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus' (r.a.) place. He lost no time in getting there. "Janab, I have here a whip in my hand," he said. Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) said, "What are you trying to say?" "Put a halt to the sama'!" the muhtassib ordered. "Very well." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) ended the sama' and did not arrange any more sessions.

21.HAL (ECSTASY / RAPTURE)

Shortly thereafter, while Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) was up for tahajjud, a voice reached him reciting the following:

" See the trick played by the river,The leaf sinks and the stone floats."

A leaf, being light, should float and a stone, being heavy, should sink. An old woman grinding some corn or wheat on her millstone in the early hours of the morning, was reciting this couplet. On hearing the couplet Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) went into a hal (state of ecstasy/ rapture). What was there about this couplet that it had this effect on him? On the face of it there was nothing. (I shall explain a bit later, insha-Allah Ta'ala, then you will understand.) Yet Shah sahib went into a state of ecstasy. The point is this, hadhrat, that he did not require to listen to qawali for him to go into a hal!

On another occasion, listening to the swishing sound of the door as it swung open and close, he again went into a hal. What was it? It was the swishing that sounded to him as if the doors were reciting "Allahu-Allah! Allahu-Allah!"

An incident concerning another buzurg comes to mind:
This buzurg was sitting with his khadim-e-khas (special attendant) on the first floor balcony. In the flat below lived another family. Downstairs the father set out to go to the bazar. His child said, "Abba, I am also coming with you." The father forbade the child to come but, a child being a child, the little one refused to listen and insisted on coming - the nagging obstinacy of a child!

The following saying is well known:
Balak-hit - the obstinacy of a child;
Terha-hit - the obstinacy of anything crooked;
Raj-hit - the obstinacy of sovereignty.

The father gave in to the persistence of the child and picked him up. "Fine then, come along." The mother scolded the child, "You have no mercy on your aged father that you finally forced him to pick you up and take you along!" The child replied, "Amma! Besides him who else do I have? If not in his arms, in whose arms?" On the balcony above, the buzurg heard the child's reply and immediately went into a state of ecstasy (hal).

Was this hal the result of some tabla or sarangi? Was this hal the result of some poetic recital? No! This was the result of the condition of the heart!

This is what it is to be of the salikin, to be of the zakirin, to be of the muhibbin! This is not to hear some na't, and tear one's kurtah in a fit of passion... so that one may get a new kurtah! This is not an exaggeration - I am relating something that has happened.

To continue: The statement the child had made caused the buzurg to go into a state of ecstasy. The khadim-e-khas enquired of the buzurg, "Hadhrat! What happened that made you to go into a hal and made you twirl in ecstasy?" "Ofo! Did you not hear?" the buzurg asked. "Hear what?" "Did you not hear what the child said?" "I heard. The child merely said, 'Who is there for me besides him?'" "Yes! That is it! What flashed into my mind immediately was: La ilaha illallah! There is only Him! In the whole world there is no other deity, no other objective, no other existence, no other presence, no other object of love, besides Him! On hearing the child's words, that there is no one besides him, my vision went directly to La ilaha illallah!"

So, when making zikr of "La ilaha illallah" make it with the above concept. Then see how much delight and enjoyment you find in your zikr, then see what is produced in your heart!

Reciting it merely as a tasbih, you will get thawab (reward), you will attain darjas (elevation in spiritual rank). However, were you to make zikr with the perspective shown above, according to the rules of zikr, according to the manner in which the sheikh prescribes it, then see what happens! Just see - did the buzurg not experience a state of rapture?

We were speaking about Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.): When he heard the couplet recited by the woman busy grinding, he went into a state of rapture. He gave the order to summon the reciters of sama'. Mind you, he had stopped listening to sama' after the muhtassib's visit. When the reciters came somebody said, "Hadhrat, they are here. But one thing we do not understand: What made you go into a hal?" Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) replied, "When the old woman recited 'The leaf sinks and the stone floats' I was reminded of the ayet of Surah Qariah:
Then, as for him whose scales are heavy (with good works), he will live a pleasant life. But as for him whose scales are light, the bereft and Hungry One [i.e. the Fire] will be his mother. S.101 A.6-9

"Whosoever's weight will be heavy, will float away into Jannat. But whosoever's weight will be light, will sink into hell. That is where my gaze fell!" That was the reason for him going into a hal. Hadhrat, that Being that is entrenched in the heart,

that Being comes to mind, no matter what statements others make! If ordinary folks like us were to read the books in which the tales of Lailah and Majnun appear, we will develop love in our hearts, a love that is carnal. Whereas, if such people like Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) and others were to read these very same books their ishq-e-ilahi (passionate love for Allah Ta'ala) increases.

To continue: The reciters having arrived, the sama' commenced. The muhtassib, who was staying over in Gangoh, got wind of it. He rushed over to put a stop to it as he had done previously. However, this time the mood of Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.), was different. The moment the muhtassib set his foot on the threshold he also went into a hal and trembling and panting, unable to control himself, he made his way to Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) with some difficulty. He said, "Hadhrat, make me bay't." "How can I?" Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) replied. "You are the muhtassib - your duty is to stop us. Last time you commanded us to stop, and we stopped." The muhtassib said, "Hadhrat, the situation today is different. I make taubah. Please make me bay't." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) made him bay't.

There is a special moment for this, a specific time. Such as with Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (r.a.)...

22.TAWAJJUH

Before relating this episode, I wish to make some precautionary remarks: Nowadays the masha'ekh have left off making tawajjuh. Conditions change and the

strength and power that people of old had, is non-existent now.
Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (r.a.) was making tawajjuh in the direction of his murids who were sitting in front of him. It so happened that a dog passed by directly in front of Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (r.a.) at that particular moment. The dog proceeded a short distance and sat down, head bowed down. One by one all the dogs of the neighbourhood appeared and they all sat down in front of this dog, all with their heads bowed down. The dog sat there for a while in this manner, with head bowed down. The other dogs sat there in a similar manner. Thereafter this dog got up and went away. The other dogs also got up and went away. The dogs had also gone into a hal! The mental power of Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (r.a.), the force of his tawajjuh, had an effect on the dogs as well! There is a special moment, a specific time, when this happens.

To continue: The muhtassib became bay't. This incident has been related in connection with Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) because he used to listen to a fair amount of sama', and the reason was that this was a remedy for the condition of "hiddate-jismani" that he suffered from. I had mentioned that his condition was such that he used to bath with ice-cold water in the mornings in the middle of winter. What sin did he commit?

23.SAMA & HADHRAT SULTANJI NIZAMUDDIN AULIYA (R.A.)

The other person who used to listen to a fair amount of sama' as well, was Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.). At the same time, however, he also laid down this law for his murids:
"If any of my murids were to listen to sama', he will cease to be my murid."

(This will be found in his malfuzat. Whoever wishes to, can go and check it out for himself.) It did happen. Once somebody came to report to him, "Hadhrat! One of your murids in such-and-such a place listens to sama'!" Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) replied, "I have told my friends" - murids were referred to as yaron / doston (friends) - "that whosoever listens to sama' ceases to be my murid. If he is listening to sama' then he is no longer my murid." Yet, he himself used to listen. But he did not allow his murids to listen. Nobody could say to him that he himself listens. No. This was inappropriate.
Are you listening carefully?

In his time there was a buzurg by the name of Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.). He was an alim and a qazi (judge). Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) lived in the same period as Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.). He advised Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin sahib, "Stop this act of bid'at! What you are doing is not correct!"

Remember that Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) used to observe all the laws pertaining to sama'. There were no tablas, sarangis, etc., as I have already mentioned. So, technically, according to the shariat laws, Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) was not involved in bid'at.
Something else comes to mind. Let me interrupt to relate this. (We had heard this from Hadhratwala(R.A.)

24.DIALOGUE WITH SHAH ABDURRUHIM SAHIB

Shah Abdurrahim sahib was a great alim and a buzurg. He once visited the mazar (mausoleum) of Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.). (Obviously, this

incident took place long after Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya(R.A.)had passed away.) A ruhani (spiritual) dialogue, a communication between the souls of the two, commenced:

Shah Abdurrahim: Janab Sultanji sahib: This practice of yours of listening to sama', what is it and where did you dig it up from?

Hadhrat Sultanji: Why? What evil was there in it?

Shah Abdurrahim: What makes you feel that it was not sinful?

Hadhrat Sultanji: Let me pose a question: What does the Hadith sharif state with regard to poetry?

(Bear in mind that both were great alims.)

Shah Abdurrahim:For poetry that is good, it is good; and for that which is bad, it is evil.

Hadhrat Sultanji: What does the Hadith sharif state with regard to husne- saut - a good voice?

Shah Abdurrahim:For a voice that is good, it is good; and for one which is bad, it is evil.

Hadhrat Sultanji: Connecting the two, what do you deduce?

Shah Abdurrahim: Good poetry read with a good voice, is good; and bad poetry read with a bad voice, is bad.

Hadhrat Sultanji: Well, we did what was hasan. When did we do anything that was qabih..?

At this point in the conversation a strange phenomenon occurred: a splendidly decorated sedan-chair suddenly appeared on the scene and sitting on it was Shah

Baha'uddin (r.a.) Naqshabandiyah. (In former times it was the custom for the masha'ekh to travel in these sedan-chairs.) Now, Shah Baha'uddin sahib was a very well known buzurg in the Naqshabandiyah silsilah, dating back quite some time. He had passed away a long time ago. In any case, the sedan-chair appeared on the scene and came to rest near the mazar of Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) and Shah Baha'uddin sahib (r.a.) alighted from it.
Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.), who had been conversing with Shah Abdurrahim sahib (r.a.), suddenly stopped and kept silent. After a short while Shah Baha'uddin sahib (r.a.) climbed back on to the sedan-chair and he, with the sedan-chair, vanished.

Shah Abdurrahim sahib (r.a.) commented to Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.): "Sultanji! This was the occasion for you to have put forward your stand with regard to listening to sama', together with all your proofs!" Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.) replied: "He is one of our elders and to have spoken like that in front of one of our elders is contrary to good manners. That is why I kept silent." The reason for Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.) saying this was that those in the Naqshabandiyah silsilah never listened to sama'!

Do you understand?

This episode has been mentioned incidentally. To continue where I had left off:

Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) had voiced his strong disapproval. When Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) would not accept, Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) kept quiet. Time passed. A time came when Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) became ill. The illness

became prolonged and his condition deteriorated. It became apparent to everybody in the city that Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) was not going to recover and that his death was imminent. He had taken a turn for the worst.

Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.) came to know of it as well. (Listen carefully! Just see the qualities of our elders, how the seniors of that era behaved towards those who were their adversaries.)

Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.) came to know as well that Qazi Sanami sahib's (r.a.) condition was deteriorating and had taken a turn for the worst. He promptly arrived at his home for ' iyadat (visiting a sick person). Who came? Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.). Arriving at the house of Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.), he knocked on the door. The laundi (servant) came out and enquired, "Who is it?" Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.) replied, "I am Nizamuddin. I have come to visit Qazi Sanami sahib." The laundi went inside and informed Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.), "It is Sultanji sahib, Hadhrat Nizamuddin sahib. He has come for your ' iyadat."

Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) said, "Go and inform him, that these are my final moments. At this crucial time when I am about to meet Haq Ta'ala, I have no wish to meet with such a bid'ati!"

[Pause]

25."FEELINGS" - AN IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE IN SULUK

Another qissah comes to mind, so let me relate it:

A certain buzurg arrived in a locality. In this town there lived another buzurg as well. This buzurg came to know that a certain buzurg had come to his town from

outside. He thought to himself, "A buzurg has come - I should go and meet him," and he got up. A feeling then came into his heart, "Do not go." So he sat down again.

Then he thought, "This is only a wehm - an unsubstantiated doubt - I am having. I should really go," and he stood up again. The feeling again came into his heart, "Don't go!" He sat down again. After a little while he thought to himself, "No, really, I should go and visit him." He got up. This feeling came again, "Don't go!" but this time he ignored it and started moving towards the door. He had hardly taken two steps when his foot slipped and he twisted his ankle!

This brings forth an important principle in sulیk:

If a person is a real, genuine muttaqi, abstinent (parezghar), zakir ahlullah and he experiences a sudden feeling in his heart, then he should not act contrary to that feeling.

Should he act contrary to that feeling he will not be committing a sin as far as his akhirat is concerned but he will definitely suffer some worldly harm.

So, this buzurg, having ignored the feeling that came into his heart - "Don't go!" - suffered some harm: his ankle got sprained. Now he could not go. One or two days later a person from that locality came to visit this buzurg. This buzurg enquired from him, "Bhai, some buzurg had come to our town - is he still here or has he left?" This person replied, "Hadhrat, he has left already. However, he turned out to be a bid'ati!" This buzurg said, "Ofo! This is the reason why my ankle got sprained! I had intended to go and visit him and this is what happened!"

To continue with Qazi Sanami sahib's (r.a.) qissah:

Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) told the laundi to tell Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.), who was waiting at the entrance for permission to enter, "Go and tell him that these are my final moments... I have no wish to meet with such a bid'ati!"

Do you understand?

The laundi went and relayed the message, "Hadhrat says that he has no wish to meet with such a bid'ati."

What was Hadhrat Sultanji sahib's (r.a.) reply to this rebuke? Ahaha! It is worth listening to! It is worth understanding! Nowadays many groups have arisen like a sudden storm, wayward in nature. People are getting enmeshed in their nets! Allah Ta'ala has placed these thoughts into my heart and I am relaying these to you.

On hearing this rebuke, Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.) replied, "Go and tell Hadhrat that I am not an ill-mannered lout that I would present myself in his presence still as a bid'ati, but I have come here having made taubah from those very acts of bid'at!"

Do you see how the Great behave? Did he become obstinate? Did he start a fight? No! He was a true zakir! He was an ahlullah in the true sense of the word! Listen further:

The message was conveyed to Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.). Qazi sahib unwound the turban which he was wearing on his head and handed it to the laundi and said, "I am aware of the high stage that Hadhrat Sultanji sahib has reached spiritually. He is not one that, stepping in here, his feet should touch the ground. Lay down this

turban from the door to my bed and request him to enter, walking on my turban. That is his worth!"

Do you see? Qazi Sanami sahib (R.A.) knew his elevated status. The disagreement with him was a shari' issue. And the disagreement was on the basis of safeguarding the populace.

The laundi took the turban to the door and bent down to unroll it. Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.) asked, "What is this?" The laundi replied, "It is Hadhrat's order, 'Lay down this turban from Hadhrat Sultanji sahib's feet to my bed, so that Hadhrat Sultanji sahib can enter walking with his shoes on my turban.'" Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) said, "How can this be? Hadhrat's turban is worthy of being placed on my head!"

Do you see the ways of the elders? Is my voice reaching you or not?

Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) took the turban from the laundi's hands, placed it on his head, and presented himself at Qazi Sanami sahib's (r.a.) bedside, and said, "Hadhrat, how can you do such a thing?" Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) said, "No. No. I know who you are, what your status is."

Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) returned the turban. The two conversed for a while, their voices a bit hushed. Qazi Sanami sahib's (r.a.) voice became weaker, his breathing a bit heavy. He said, "Hadhrat, these are my last moments. Hadhrat, make du'a that my khatimah is with iman." Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) made du'a, "May Allah Ta'ala maintain your final moments with salamati and iman." He then said, "Hadhrat, permission to leave?" Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) said, "Very well."

Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) wrote afterwards, "I had just reached the door and stepped out when the sound of the crying of the household people came from inside, that Hadhrat Qazi sahib had passed away!"

26.CONCLUSION

I cannot say why today these topics have cropped up, why they came forth from my lips. It surely is in the knowledge of Allah Ta'ala. These are issues which are essential to recognise and essential to know and essential to come into one's realm of 'ilm: what are the ways others have introduced and how our elders have taken the utmost care to safeguard themselves, protect themselves from going contrary to the sunnat.

Do you understand?

It is almost time for namaz. This faqir, this humble servant, is about to leave. Maybe at some other time, insha-Allah Ta'ala, Allah Ta'ala granting the taufiq, I will make your khidmat. In the meantime learn and memorise a lesson given by Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Thanwi (r.a.). And what is that? Hadhratwala (r.a.) stressed the following:

Do not forsake your school of thought;And, do not interfere with that of others!

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the taufiq to make amal on the sunnat - ittiba'-e- sunnat - in the correct meaning of the term with tawadhu and taqwa.

Chapter No.:

10

THE THIRD MAJLIS Who Should One Listen To?

1.FOREWORD

Alhamdulillah! Through the fadhl of Allah Taala and the barkat of our sheikh, this tenth booklet (not counting the Special Issue) is now ready.

This tenth number is meant to be a bonus issue in that the ambitious task has been undertaken of translating three consecutive majalis that Hadhratjee (R.A.) held in Lahore, Pakistan, in October 1986. The occasion was the annual jalsah of the

organisation Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen, Pakistan. It is appropriate, therefore, to note down a few comments concerning the Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen:

Very briefly: When Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (R.A.) saw the decline in the Muslim ummat, compounded with the onslaught from outside forces, he wrote two kitabs to remedy the situation. The one was Hayatul Muslimeen, and the other was Siyanatul Muslimeen, wherein an all-comprehensive programme was laid down for the revival of the ummat. In order to give practical force to the programme the body Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen was formed. This was approximately in the year 1930.

The object was to put into practice the teachings contained in the two kitabs -i.e. that Islam be practised in its all-comprehensive form, taking into account aqaid, ibadat, muasharat, muamulat and akhlaq. Branches of the organisation were subsequently established in different areas, with the main centre, subsequent to Hadhrat Thanvis (R.A.) demise, and after the formation of Pakistan, being established in Lahore by Hadhrat Thanvis (R.A.) senior khalifa-e-khas, Hadhrat Maulana Shah Hafez Jaleel Ahmed Sherwani saheb (R.A.) in 1953. Upon the latters demise the reins were taken over by Hadhrat Maulana Sayyid Najmul Hasan saheb Sherwani. Annually an ijtima is held in Lahore, where those connected to the "Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen gather and the aims of the organisation are propagated.

It is at one such ijtima that our Hadhratjee (R.A.) spoke. The first majlis, conducted by our Hadhratjee (R.A.) after the Asr namaz, is directed more towards

those connected to the Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen. The theme is that of nisbat, which is then developed in the subsequent majalis held on the following two days.

At the end of this booklet is a translation of a letter written by Hadhratjee (R.A.) on the subject of nisbat. This letter very nicely summarises and rounds off the subject.

May Allah Taala grant all of us, the readers, those who have assisted, and the translator, and all our families true and correct nisbat maAllah.

DR I M

(Here follows a translation of a series of majalis held by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammed Maseehullah Khan saheb (R.A.) on being invited to address those attending the annual ijtima of the Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen (Pakistan) in Lahore. Dates: 16th, 17th and 18th October 1986, corresponding with the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Safar 1407.)

2.NISBAT AFFILIATION :THE FIRST MAJLIS

What can one say? Bayans (lectures) continue to be delivered. And here there are limitless bayans being delivered!

In any case what I wish to state is that last year as well this servant was invited to attend the annual ijtima of the Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen. However, one may put it that the water and grain of this place was not in my taqdeer then, or one may say that the length and severity of my illness were the causes for this servants non-attendance. Otherwise, it is obvious that whatever is specifically linked to ones sheikh - the nisbat is to ones sheikh - and one is invited to it, and there are no special hindrances, then not to attend is not to value ones nisbat! And especially

those individuals who have a more specific and special affiliation, a very special nisbat, they have no grounds for excusing themselves or allowing obstacles to present themselves.

Nisbat is a great thing.

And when one considers that the person to whom one is affiliated is a sahebe Haq - a person who is on Truth - and him being a sahebe Haq has already been established by various proofs, then the nisbat is taken into even greater consideration. One does not then search for excuses for not attending. To the contrary, one searches for excuses that will make it possible, in whatever way, for one to definitely attend.

This is applicable to each individual according to his aqeedat in (faith and confidence) and taalluq with (affiliation) the sahebe Haq.

3.SIR SYED AHMED KHAN SAHEB AND THE BEGGAR

A qissah comes to mind concerning an incident from which one may learn a great lesson:

This incident concerns Sir Syed Ahmed Khan saheb, the founder of Aligarh College. (For some years now it is a fully fledged University.)

It was a hot summers day. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan saheb was relaxing on a couch in his room. A companion of his, one of the nobility of Hyderabad Dekkan, was similarly relaxing on a couch nearby. The nobility in those days used to cool themselves by having a screen of sweet-smelling grass suspended in the room whilst an attendant used to sprinkle water on it and fan them with large hand-fans.

(There were no electric fans or coolers in those days.) These two were resting thus when Sir Syed Ahmed Khan saheb observed through the glass doors the arrival of a beggar outside. The beggar stopped at the well situated just outside, and laid down his knapsack.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan saheb commented to his companion, This person is going to come here in the guise of a durwesh, but I will not give him even one paisa! As predicted, the beggar, having changed into the garb of a durwesh, came up to the door and knocked. His knock was ignored. But these beggars tend to be daring and tenacious. The hint from inside had no effect and the knocking continued persistently. Finally, the attendant was told to open the door. The durwesh entered, made salam and sat down. However, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan saheb, having seen that this was just an ordinary person who had merely changed into the garb of a durwesh, continued to ignore him.

The durwesh, seeing the indifference, spoke sharply, Do you not recognise who I am? I am that person who has had the honour of visiting such-and-such a person! My eyes have been blessed by gazing at his radiant noor-filled face! On hearing this Sir Syed Ahmed Khan saheb immediately sat up. Asking his attendant to bring his cash-box, he took from it a generous sum, got up from his couch, went over to the durwesh and standing respectfully before him, handed over the money. Huzoor! Kindly accept this gift! The durwesh accepted the money and left.

The companion from Hyderabad commented drily, Just now you were adamant that you would not give him a single paisa, but then you went and handed over to

him a substantial amount! Sir Syed Ahmed Khan saheb said, Do you not realise what he said? The companion said, He merely said that he had met a certain person. Do you know the person he said he had visited? His companion said, No. I dont. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan saheb said, The person whose name he took was my sheikh! When he took the name of my sheikh, saying that he had visited him, he was showing an affiliation (nisbat) to my sheikh. Heavens! Then how could I be so audacious as to ignore him and refuse his request?

Let us stop to ponder! Those whom we consider to be dunyadar (worldly people), just see the qualities they have in them. Note that the durwesh was not his sheikh but had merely claimed to have seen his sheikh. Only Allah Taala knows whether he had seen him or not. These people are very professional. He may have fished out this information from somebody, as to who Sir Syed Ahmed Khan sahebs sheikh was. But see, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan saheb did not cross examine him: When did you see him? Where did you see him? What was his appearance like? Describe his features and complexion. No. He did not delve into all that.

His attitude was: If I have no proof to the contrary, why should I consider a Muslim person to be a liar? Thus, he handed him the money and the beggar left.

To continue: Sir Syed Ahmed Khan saheb, still addressing his companion, said, "It is a good thing that he accepted what I had presented to him. If he had told me Hand over the entire cash-box to me, I take a qasm (oath) on Allah Taala that, because of the nisbat, I would have picked up the entire cash-box and handed it over to him!

Ponder! This is a so-called dunyadar individual, yet showing such qualities which should be seen in us who are considered to be deendar people.

So, if something has a nisbat with a person, and that person is of the ahle-Haq, and one also has nisbat with that person, is it possible to look for excuses for being absent? Can this be proof of respect within his heart for that person?
Yes, if some special obstacle were to present itself, then with heartfelt grief -with utter grief - he will be absent. Otherwise there is no reason for not being present, and this applies more so to those who have a special connection (taalluq).

Moreover, when that particular cause that we are speaking about, has been structured by the said ahle-Haq, and the very foundations have been laid by him, then it is not just for the duration of his life time. It is for afterwards as well, even after he has passed away. Such individuals do not die (wafat pana) but they become transposed (muntaqil hona).

4.INTIQAL HONA

The reason why the term intiqal is used for a mumin on his death is because he will now receive full and complete reward in the hereafter. He is now transposed from this world to another, where he will receive full and complete compensation for those amal (deeds) which he had performed with complete sincerity, with the taufeeq of Allah Taala. Both terms - wafat and intiqal - are used to denote physical death. In appearance the person appears to die, but in reality the person remains alive. And from the graves of certain special individuals tremendous spiritual benefit is derived and abundant faiz (spiritual effulgence) is attained.

I am reminded of something related to us by Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Thanvi (R.A.): Our pardada peer Hadhrat Mianjee Noor Muhammed saheb (R.A.) had become ill. The illness took a serious turn and did not appear to abate. So much so that he realised that he would not live long. Originally from a place called Jhinjhana he had come to live in a place called Lohari, and he now yearned to return to his hometown. He called forth for a sedan-chair (palki) to be brought and he went to sit in it and set forth.

Incidentally, in that era [early 19th century] the ulema would travel on horseback and the mashaekh travelled in these sedan-chairs. We are not speaking of present times.

In order to reach Jhinjhana he had to pass through Thana Bhavan. When passing through Hadhrat Mianjee Noor Muhammed saheb (R.A.) ordered the sedan-chair to be stopped outside the khanqah, and requested the chair-bearers to call Hajee saheb.

Who was Hajee saheb? This was none other than Hajee Imdadullah (R.A.), the sheikh of Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Thanvi (R.A.). He had already acquired fame in his youth. Originally he had entered the Naqshabandia silsilah and had already been given khilafat there. But he did not rest.

We, on the other hand, experience a few effects of zikr and we sit back completely satisfied and complacent. But Hajee sahebs thirst was not quenched. Even after having reached the stage of a khalifa, his search continued. One night Hajee saheb had a dream in which he had made ziyarat of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi

wasallam), who had indicated to him to become' bayt to a certain person whose features were shown to Hajee saheb in the dream. That was all.

At that time there lived here in Jalalabad a great buzurg. He had the special honour of making ziyarat (visiting)of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in a state of wakefulness. Hajee saheb used to come to this buzurg to study the kitab Hisne Haseen. This buzurg noticed Hajee sahebs restlessness and advised him, Mianjee - in those days the pious and scholars were addressed as Mianjee or Mullajee, but nowadays one cannot use these titles because people feel insulted - Mianjee! You appear still to be thirsty spiritually. There is a village called Lohari, nearby here. There is a buzurg there. Why do you not go and see him?

Hajee saheb went to Lohari. When he entered the khanqah there and set eyes on Hadhrat Mianjee Noor Muhammed saheb (R.A.) with a sudden jolt he realised that this was the same buzurg shown to him in his dream by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)! Hajee saheb became bayt in the Chistiyah silsilah to Hadhrat Mianjee Noor Muhammed saheb (R.A.) and progressed here as well to the stage where he was again given khilafat.

To continue: Hadhrat Mianjee Noor Muhammed saheb (R.A.), being very ill, had stopped at the khanqah in Thana Bhavan and had ordered the palki-bearers to summon Hajee saheb. Hajee saheb came out and peered into the palki through the curtains, and saw his sheikh lying ill in it. Salams were exchanged, musafahah was made, and Hadhrat Mianjee Noor Muhammed saheb (R.A.) said, Hajee saheb! My idea at this moment is that I should take more work from you. Remember that Hajee saheb had already been given the responsibilities of khilafat from two

silsilas. Hadhrat Mianjee Noor Muhammed saheb (R.A.) repeated, My heart desires that I should take more work from you. It appears as if my time is limited. Hearing this tears came to the eyes of Hajee saheb, indeed as they should!

These august personalities do not shed tears at the thought of separation that death brings, but they weep with the grief that: Tomorrow, should I be in need of my sheikh, or some obstacles come across my path, to whom shall I turn to in order to solve my problems? My spiritual progress will come to a standstill!

Seeing his tears Hadhrat Mianjee Noor Muhammed saheb (R.A.) remarked (and this is the purpose of relating this episode!) Do not feel concerned. Do not distress yourself. A faqeer does not die - he is merely transposed! I will not be around, but my grave will be there. You should frequent it. Insha-Allah Taala, you will then still attain the same faiz as you have attained in my lifetime.

This is something to ponder over.

As I was saying: When a person has established something and laid down the foundations for it, and structured it, then should not those who are connected to him, those who are his followers, direct their attention at bringing about further progress and elevating it higher? This is what those who have ikhlas and sidq would desire! Or should they be doing the opposite - bringing about retrogression and destroying it? And this applies even more so to those who have an extra-special affiliation, like being the offspring.

Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Thanvi (R.A.) once spoke thus, concerning Maulana Jaleel Ahmed saheb (R.A.) (who was known as Piyare-mian, and who was my brother-in-

law), If there was a custom of doing it, I would have made Maulana Jaleel Ahmed my adopted son.

This is something to ponder over. Take a lesson from it.

(Maulana Jaleel Ahmed saheb (R.A.) left all his possessions in Hindustan and came to Pakistan, bringing with him the Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen, and dedicated his whole life and wealth in propagating its ideals. Whatever he had he sacrificed, spending the remainder of his life in straitened circumstances.)

5.MAULANA ILYAS (R.A.) AND THE TABLEEGH JAMAT

Take the situation of Maulana Ilyas saheb (R.A.), who founded the Tableegh Jamat, which has its centre (markaz) in Nizamuddin, Delhi. When he passed away the Tableegh Movement did not come to an end, but it was fostered by his son Hadhrat Maulana Yusuf saheb (R.A.), who was also the son-in-law of Sheikhul Hadith Hadhrat Maulana Zakariya saheb (R.A.), and he propagated the movement further. He put his full effort into it and spread it even more. When Hadhrat Maulana Yusuf saheb (R.A.) passed away, the reins were taken over by Hadhrat Maulana Inamul Hasan saheb, who was also a son-in-law of Hadhrat Zakariya saheb (R.A.). And he too fully exerted himself in this effort, causing the movement to grow and grow, with fadhle-ilahi and taufeeqe-ilahi. Just observe the sincerity in them, the unity and muhabbat they had within themselves.

People from outlying areas come to the markaz in Nizamuddin, Delhi, in connection with the affairs of the Tableegh Movement. Some of them come to visit me in Jalalabad as well from time to time. Once, quite a big group of people came

to meet me. A bit surprised at their number, I asked them what was happening? They explained that Hadhrat Maulana Inamul Hasan saheb had gathered in Delhi people from different parts of Mysore and Madras in the south of India. Every six to twelve months workers are called and instructed on how to go about the work of tableegh. This was the purpose for their coming to Delhi from Mysore and Madras.

6.ADVERTISING

The point I wish to make is that there is no necessity for them to hand out handbills. You will have seen that they never ever give out handbills, because each individual is himself a handbill! Whenever an ijtima is taking place you will not find any printed notices and handbills publicising the event, but jamats will go out to different areas, localities and towns. They will then make ghast, inviting towards the ijtima, and taking out with them newcomers in their thousands, to attend the ijtima!

Whereas at our ijtimas, those of the Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen, handbills and notices have to be printed and distributed, and even then, only a handful of people present themselves.

7.COLLECTION OF FUNDS

In the same way, they do not have to go around collecting funds, because they are a fund in themselves! They have many well-to-do people, millionaires and billionaires, who are jamat workers. They themselves make their funds available on a continuous basis. It is not necessary for anybody to tell them to donate funds. They have dedicated themselves with such sincerity that they have worn themselves out, body, soul and wealth, in this effort.

Because of this nisbat with Hadhrat Maulana Ilyas saheb (R.A.), with what great compassion and courage, and painstaking effort, did Hadhrat Maulana Yusuf saheb (R.A.), and, now, Hadhrat Maulana Inamul Hasan saheb, steer the movement ahead.

These points I have brought up to underline that my sheikh, Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali saheb (R.A.) was the one to establish Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen. Its nisbat is towards him. So, those who have a taalluq, and have ikhlas and sidq, have no grounds for excuses.

It is necessary to keep ones hearts clean at all times, what is termed husne-zin (to harbour good thoughts and not to entertain evil suspicions). This work is not to be kept dependent on the presence or absence of any individual, or on the founder being alive or not.

8.HUSNE-ZIN (NEK-GUMANI) AND SUE-ZIN (BID-GUMANI)

Husne-zin is a great quality, whereas the opposite - sue-zin - is a very vile act. In the Court of Haq Taala you will not be called to account on having had husne-zin with regard to a certain person, but you will definitely be taken to task as to why you had sue-zin with regard to a certain person. Why did you have bid-gumani towards a certain person - why did you harbour evil thoughts about him? You will not be questioned as to why you thought well of him.

Have nek-guman with regard to every mumin.

& Verily, some suspicion is a sin. S.49 A.12

Until and unless there is a shari basis, bid-gumani is a sin. There has to be a proper shari investigation and shari evidence, or the person himself either acknowledges or refutes the allegations. Bid-gumani and sue-zin creates fasad (mischief/ trouble/ dissension), and causes fitna to spread.

8.HADHRAT ALI (R.A.) MAKING SALAM TO HADHRAT ABUBAKR (R.A.)

An incident comes to mind:

Once Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.) was walking along in a certain direction.

Approaching him from the opposite direction was Hadhrat Ali (R.A.). When they were fairly close, Hadhrat Ali (R.A.) made salam to Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.), who replied to the salam. It so happened that a Sahabi (R.A.) was passing by and took note of this meeting between the two, where Hadhrat Ali (R.A.) made salam first. He thought to himself, What transpired is contrary to the normal practice of Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.). It was always the habit of Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.), whenever he met Hadhrat Ali (R.A.), to greet first. Whereas, on this occasion, he did not initiate the salam, but Hadhrat Ali (R.A.) made salam first. Is there not, perhaps, some discord between the two, some change in their hearts, some ill-feelings, some unpleasantness? The Sahabi (R.A.) went straight to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and reported the incident to him: I always used to see Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.) make salam to Hadhrat Ali (R.A.) first. Today, the opposite happened. Whenever anything happens contrary to normal practice, it is only natural that suspicions are aroused.

Another qissah:

Another incident springs to mind, one that Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Thanvi (R.A.), related to us. Let me mention this incident before continuing:

One buzurg used to be in the habit of visiting another buzurg.

(You will find)
Birds of a kind
Together they will fly along,
Dove with a dove, falcon with a falcon.

One day this buzurg did not come visit him as was his normal routine. The thought came to the other buzurg that there must be some valid reason for him not coming. The following day also he did not come visit him, and on the third day as well. The doubts now assailed him, I must have done something wrong for him not to visit me, contrary to his normal habit. He proceeded to the house of the buzurg and knocked on the door. The first buzurg answered the knock, salams were exchanged, musafahah was made, and he asked, Why have you taken the trouble to come? Huzoor! the second buzurg replied, You used to visit me daily. Three days have passed and you have not visited me. The thought came to me that perhaps the reason is that I may have been rude or insulting to you, that I may perhaps have said or did something to upset you. The first buzurg said, If that were the case, the Hadith shareef states that if there is some discord with ones friend during any discussion, clear it up there and then, in that very majlis. One should not leave it for some other time. So, if there was anything you said or did along these lines, I

would have brought it up there and then, and clarified the matter. Rest assured that I have no complaints against you. Much relieved, the second buzurg asked, Then, why did you not come? The first buzurg replied, I had developed an abscess, that is why I could not come. The second buzurg asked, Where is the abscess? This time the first buzurg gave no reply. He remained silent.

There are two possible reasons for him to have kept silent. One is due to his natural disposition, his temperament; the other is due to a shari reason.Firstly, the disposition of some individuals is that of being naturally very modest and shy, and to mention certain anatomical parts of the body is difficult. The person feels extremely shy to mention these.

Secondly, the shari aspect is as follows: Seeing that the second buzurg now knew that the reason the first buzurg could not visit him was that he had an abscess which caused him great pain and difficulty in walking, then the question as to where the abscess was situated, was an irrelevant and useless question, what is termed la-yani.

9.LA-YANI

Ayyuhat-tullab! Ponder a bit! What is the relevant Hadith shareef?

Of the beauty of a persons Islam is that he shuns what is useless/ futile.

These were the sufiya-muhaqqiqeen who acted on the Hadith shareef and ayat of the Quran shareef! This is that tasawwuf, that sulook, which is an extremely exquisite section of the sacred shariah! This tasawwuf, this sulook is not a category apart from the shariah. Nay! It is very much a part of it, and a very delicate and

extremely exquisite part, which Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Thanvi (R.A.), used to express as follows:

Do you know what sulook is? This sulook is a rooh (soul). To which rooh can one liken it to? The rooh of the malaekah! The rooh is an extremely delicate and exquisite entity, even more so of such a delicate creation as the malaekah.

To continue: The first buzurg had kept silent. He had not replied because the second buzurg had asked a question that was irrelevant (la-yani). Seeing that he now knew why the first buzurg had not visited him, why ask Where did you have the abscess? When the object had been achieved, why ask further? This question was superfluous - it was contrary to the teaching of min husni islamilmari tarku mala yanihi

The second buzurg also sensed that his question was superfluous. He went back home, and on his return he fell prostrate in sajdah, lamenting and beseeching forgiveness in that he had been involved in la-yani!

These are the effects of sulook! These are the results of zikr and taqwa, combined with sulook! This tongue that we posses, has not been given for la-yani. Haq Taala has created the tongue for His zikr, and the heart has been created for His yad (remembrance). It comes in the Hadith shareef that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has stated that the tongue should be zakir (making zikr), that the heart should be shakir (making shukr), and the body should be sabir (making sabr). This tongue has been created for the zikr of Allah Taala, so why is there la-yani kalam (useless and futile speech)? And the heart is for the yad of Allah Taala.

Just ponder: Allah Taala is One. There is only one tongue, and the heart is single. Other parts of the body come in pairs: two hands, two feet, two eyes, two ears, two kidneys, etc. So that One Allah Taala has created one tongue for His zikr, and one heart for His remembrance! A tongue not making zikr, can it be called a tongue? That heart not in yad, can it be called a heart?

That heart is no heart in which You are not present!

The zikr of Allah Taala is demanded from us all the time, whereas the five daily namazes are for set and limited times.

W'hen ye have performed your salat, remember Allah standing, sitting, and reclining. S.4 A.103

Allah Taala is addressing us, as if to say, When you have completed performing your namaz do not imagine that you have fulfilled all My rights on you. Nay! Nay! That namaz was for a limited period. Whereas, whilst standing (qiyaman) or whilst sitting (quudan) or whilst lying on your sides (ala junubikum), you should still be involved in My zikr!

10.ZIKR LISANI AND ZIKR QALBI AND RIYA

Zikr has two locations - there are two sites in the body where zikr is made. One is the tongue and the other is the heart. Making zikr with the tongue is called zikr lisani, and zikr made in the heart is called zikr qalbi. With zikr lisani there should be zikr qalbi, and with zikr qalbi there should be zikr lisani - this is the ideal, that there should be zikr taking place in both places simultaneously. This is the comprehensive form of zikr. Otherwise, at times, one is deceived into thinking that

even though one is not making zikr lisani one is involved in zikr qalbi, whereas the heart is devoid of zikr - the heart is not zakir. The heart is empty! In contrast, zikr lisani is a conscious act, and one cannot be deceived. That is why some individuals carry a tasbeeh in their hands. By doing so the thought should never enter ones mind that this is riya (i.e. doing something for show).

Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (R.A.) used to hold a tasbeeh in his hand. Somebody enquired, Hadhrat! You have already reached a very lofty status spiritually, in that the yad of Allah Taala is all the time in your heart and you are making zikr all the time. So, what need is there for the tasbeeh? Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (R.A.) replied, This tasbeeh in my hand is my benefactor. It was the initial means and cause for our gaining that stage of being in the remembrance of Allah Taala. So, should I now be ungrateful and discard it?

Take note: Those asbab (procedures/ causes) that make us neglectful of the yad of Zate Bari Taala, they are worthy of being discarded. Whereas those asbab that draw us closer to the zikr of Zate Bari Taala, we have to hold firmly on to.

To continue with the topic of husne-zin: I had related that Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.) had not initiated the salam on meeting Hadhrat Ali (R.A.), and the Sahabi (R.A.) who had witnessed this had gone to relate the incident to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), fearing that perhaps there was some discord between the two. Today Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.) did not make salam first, but Hadhrat Ali (R.A.) had to make salam first. Huzoor (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), would you not investigate?

Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.) was summoned. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) asked, Abubakr, did any incident take place today between you and Ali? Yes, replied Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.). Ali was approaching as I was proceeding along. As we neared one another, he made salam, and I replied. I did not make salam first.
Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) asked, And what was your habit previous to this?

Take note that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) did not act merely on the statement of the Sahabi (R.A.). No judgement was made, but the matter was investigated first.

Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.) replied, Previously it was my habit to make salam to Ali first. Then why did you act contrary to your habit today? asked Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Pay attention now!

Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.) replied, For this reason that, whenever I used to initiate the salam, I used to notice that the showering of anwar-e-ilahi (spiritual radiance from Allah Taala) was greater on me and less on Ali. Today I adopted it-har (selflessness) so that the anwar of Zate Bari Taala should shower more on my brother Ali, and less on me!

What was revealed after investigation? Whereas what were the assumptions prior to this? After investigation the true picture was revealed, that there were no differences, no discord between the two. Investigation revealed an amazing aspect!

11.THAWAB OF INITIATING SALAM

Students may raise a query here: To make salam is sunnat. To reply is wajib. The reward of a wajib act is more, and that of a sunnat act is less. However, from the above incident it is apparent that initiating the salam, which is sunnat, drew greater anwar-e-ilahi, and therefore greater thawab (reward), whereas replying to the salam, which is wajib, drew lesser anwar-e-ilahi, and, therefore, lesser thawab. This is the direction in which a students mind will race, as it should. That is why it is said:

In other words, that student who sits in front of his ustadh without asking any whys? and wherefores?, and that mureed who sits in front of his sheikh full of whys? and wherefores?, both of them should go and stay in the jungle! They have no need to reside amongst humans!
It is part of the students work and study to do academic research. Whereas the work of the mureed is to take the treatment that is prescribed to him.

As I was saying, the student may raise a query as to the apparent contradiction in the thawab attached to the salam. The answer to this query is that the thawab is based on the mujahadah (striving against the dictates of the nafs). Initiating the salam is not an act that everybody has the courage for! Only that person is able to do so who has real, genuine humility in his tabiyet, genuine lowliness, a nafs that is subjugated (kasre nafs). Initiating the salam is a manifestation of ones humbleness, whereas in replying there is a type of boasting: I am being greeted! This is especially so when somebody important makes salam to a lesser person, then the

latters ego is even more inflated, and he goes around saying, Today such-and-such a person greeted me! thereby trying to impress on others his own rank.

So, in replying to a salam there is a type of boast, whereas in initiating the salam there is humility. And thawab and qurbe-ilahi is based on humility. Allah Taala loves humbleness, very much so!
All this is an elucidation of sue-zin and husne-zin, and the importance of first investigating before jumping to conclusions.

We were speaking about nisbat (affiliation), that this is a great entity. In whichever direction one has nisbat, one places importance to it to the degree of that taalluq (connection) - one attaches importance to it, and one takes the necessary care and consideration to preserve and propagate it.
Yes, if on some rare occasion, by a process of deduction, some contrary thought comes into ones mind, that is a different matter. However, even then, if somebody places a reasonable argument in front of one to dispel this notion, and one has no actual proof to reject this argument - and there is no obstinacy in oneself, and one is not proud or conceited - then one should accept the argument.

12.NISBAT AND HADHRAT ABUBAKR (R.A.)

Huzoore-akram (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had passed away. However, during his blessed lifetime, shortly before his demise, he had handed the standard - the flag taken by the commander when proceeding for jihad - to Hadhrat Usama (R.A.). He was instructed to proceed forth. Hadhrat Usama (R.A.) left. Shortly thereafter, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) passed away. There was consternation and

panic among the Muslims. Some tribes even became apostate. Some refused to pay zakat.

Over here the Muhajireen and Ansar were having mashwarah (consultations) as to who should succeed to take over the role of head of state. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), besides being a Nabi, was also a king, an ameer, the head of a state. So, it was necessary to have somebody to take over the reins so that the administration and the application of the laws could be kept intact.

Hadhrat Umar (R.A.) saw that there was much vacillation and uncertainty, and that this was causing an undue delay. He thought to himself, Who can be more worthy and deserving than Abubakr Siddiq? He thus took the initiative and took bayt at the hands of Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.). On seeing this, others also starting taking bayt at the hands of Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.), and shortly, there was a general consensus (ijma) of the Sahaba (R.A.) on the khilafat of Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.).

Now, on the one hand, there were those who refused to pay zakat, and they had to be brought under control. On the other hand the army under Hadhrat Usama (R.A.) was ready for jihad, and the Muslim forces in Medina appeared depleted. Hadhrat Umar Farooq (R.A.) advised Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.), Wait a while, make sabr. Do not, as yet, send any forces against those who refuse to pay zakat. However, if you insist on doing so, recall the force sent under Usama, for they are still on their way and have not reached the position they were posted to.

Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.) retorted, 0 Umar! What has happened to you? In the Age of Jahalat (Ignorance) you were very stern, and now you have changed to become very soft! Usama was given the standard by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and dispatched. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) himself handed the standard to Usama. Its nisbat is with Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Are you asking me to separate it? That will never happen! If all of you decline to support me, then I will proceed all by myself! Hadhrat Umar (R.A.) commented afterwards, It was then that light dawned on me!

Do you understand? We are speaking of nisbat.

13.NISBAT AND THE SAHABA (R.A.)

Furthermore: It was that period after the demise of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). His mission of dawah to iman was completed. This responsibility now rested on the shoulders of the Sahaba (R.A.). An insight into their qualities is the following: During the lifetime of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) there were a group of munafiqeen (hypocrites) in the community. Wahi (revelation) used to come to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) as to who they were. A scribe was entrusted with the task of writing down their names, but this was in strict confidence. Among the sincere (mukhlis) Sahaba (R.A.) there were some who feared, Are our names not included amongst them? They would thus approach the scribe and pose this very question to him!

But coming back to the point: That which Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had established - Haq and Tauheed - to what extent was it not propagated? The

responsibility was placed on the shoulders of the Sahaba (R.A.). How much toil and effort did they not put into it? How much did they not train themselves, and trained others as well? How much firmness and steadfastness did they not display? How much strength and force did they not exert? How committed were they not in their obedience? Note that proof of muhabbat is through obedience (ittibaiyet). Proof of muhabbat is not through lip-service. And the degree of obedience will be proof of the proportionate degree of muhabbat. A mere claim of muhabbat is not sufficient proof, for example, as was seen with the munafiqeen (hypocrites) and their lip-service to Islam. The mukhlis - sincere - Sahaba (R.A.) were different.

It is well known that there were approximately one hundred and twenty thousand Ambiya (A.S.) that were sent by Allah Taala. The approximate number of Sahaba (R.A.) that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) left behind were also in the region of one hundred and twenty thousand. Taking note of the Hadith shareef:

The ulema of my ummat are like the Ambiya of the Bani-Israil.

One hundred and twenty thousand Ambiya came before Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam); and there were one hundred and twenty thousand Sahaba (R.A.) after him. It is as if each Sahabi (R.A.) stood for a Nabi (A.S.) of the Bani-Israil.

So, after the demise of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) the Sahaba (R.A.) maintained and established that nisbat, which will remain till the day of Qiyamat. From this one should understand that there are two factors to take into account: One is that personality towards whom there is nisbat; the other is that particular

item that has been established by the personality in question. The continuation of what has been established is not dependant on the continued existence of the personality. Even though that personality ceases to exist, what he has established will continue to flourish. The reason is this that the nisbat was to such an exalted personality, that the muhabbat for that person motivated those who were connected to him into maintaining and further propagating what had been established. It is not a situation that, as long as the personality is there that those who are connected to him, maintain it, and the moment he is not there, they forget about it.

Just see! Whatever Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had presented as objectives, the Sahaba (R.A.) clutched these to their breasts, and, not only during the lifetime of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), but even after his demise they maintained these and propagated these further, as we saw Hadhrat Abubakr Siddiq (R.A.) doing. To have maintained the foundations laid by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) only during his lifetime, and not bother after his demise, would have been merely showing ones face. This would not have been ikhlas.

Nisbat! Here understand as well that there are two words which are very similar. One is nisbat (affiliation), the other is nasab (family lineage). The amount of concern and effort a son puts into an item established by his father -the care and concern that he has that it should not be spoiled and that it should progress further - no one else will have. In the same way, nay, even more so, this applies to that parson who has attained a batini nisbat! At times this nisbat is greater than nasab. The favourable and promising condition is this.

As I had said, the affiliation of the Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen is to my sheikh Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Thanvi (nawwarallahu marqadahu). The foundation was laid by him and brought into existence by him. Therefore, there can be no excuses for not attending, unless some special insurmountable obstacles present themselves. However, one should not look for excuses for not attending.

Some say it was four years since my previous visit here (i.e. to Pakistan) - I tend to think that it was three years back, but others insist it was four years ago, and perhaps it was so. In any case I was quite ill while I was here, and I left while still in that condition, and even afterwards I remained ill, and the illness became aggravated, so much so that there was no hope of my surviving. There was no hope that I would remain alive. But then Allah Taala blessed me with more years of living, as if to say that I am being given an opportunity to compensate for any of my shortcomings of the past, and if I have any expectations for the future, I should continuously make dua for taufeeq for these.

At that time I was extremely ill. Even now I am exceptionally weak, to that extent that it is difficult for me to walk without support. One may say that it is due to good nutrition, or some other external factors, that I have had the strength to be able to walk. Then, also, some have honoured me by extending an invitation time and again for me to attend, and thus to see to their needs; and also the encouragement and support of the individuals back home are also factors - in any case, whatever the factors, by the taufeeq of Allah Taala, I am here, despite my weakness.

This follows on what I had stated previously: Never at any time, or on any occasion, with regard to any person whomsoever, should one bring any bid-gumani into ones heart. That such-and-such a person, who has some taalluq, and he is not here? That he, more so than others, should have come and participated! There could arise some valid reasons for him not attending. So, nek-guman is compulsory, and it is necessary that one should abstain from bid-gumani. Allah Taala will not put the question, Why did you have nek-gumani with regard to a certain individual? But the question will be asked, Why did you have bid-gumani with regard to a certain individual?

May Allah Taala give us, and all mumineen, the taufeeq to keep our hearts clean and pure towards other mumineen!

14.UNITY AND DISUNITY

These are the factors that are the root causes of all disunity. This has been mentioned in the Quran shareef, that as long as these items keep on appearing in practice, to create unity is impossible, a day-dream. If you so wish you may deliver lectures on the topic of unity. You can discuss unity ad infinitum in the newspapers and in essays. Hold innumerable marches and processions for unity. Unity will never be achieved by these lectures, discussions, essays and marches, as long as the habits and roots of disunity are still present within individuals. These are illnesses within ourselves.

Have we not been told the following?

Do not have hasad (jealousy).

Do not have bugz (malice).

Do not have nafrat (repulsion).

Do not defame one another.

Do not make gheebat i.e. do not backbite one another.

(Hadith shareef & S.49 A.11-12)

These are illnesses within us. Within us we have keenah (malice), we have hasad (jealousy), we have bugz (hatred), we have the tendency to call one another by despicable names, we make gheebat (back-bite). As long as these qualities are kept within ourselves there is no question of creating unity. Yes, should we vehemently oppose these qualities, unity will be seen.

As far as it is possible, as much as one can, one should keep ones heart completely clear and clean as far as our fellow mumins are concerned. It comes in the Hadith shareef that when a person with even the slightest amount of keenah (malice) within his heart presents himself at the door of Jannat, he will be stopped. No doubt he is a Jannati - he has permission to enter Jannat. But anybody with keenah within himself will not be allowed to enter Jannat. He will be ordered, Halt! While he is thus kept waiting, other Jannatees will be seen to be entering Jannat. Zate Bari Taala greatly desires that this person should also enter Jannat. However there is within him a fragment of filth, of evil. Haq Taala will say, Jannat is not a place in which to argue and fight. It is a place to stay with muhabbat (love and affection). He will be told to stand up, and Zate Bari Taala will Himself remove the keenah from his chest. Only now will the order be given, Go! Enter!

15.WISDOM BEHIND NOT HAVING SONS

It is nearly time for the azan. At this moment this thought has come to mind: This ijtima is that of the Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen, whose founder was our sheikh Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Thanvi (R.A.). Efforts should be made to promote it and cause it to progress and expand more. There is no filial succession. That is: there are no children of our sheikh who could take over. And it has happened for the best that Hadhratwala had no son. Remember that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had sons and daughters, but the male offspring passed away. This happened for the best. Note that other Ambiya (A.S.) who had existed previously had sons who were ambiya, and grandsons and progeny who were ambiya as well.

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had sons, but these were not allowed to survive by Allah Taala. If they had survived, there were two possibilities: either they would have been ambiya, or they would not have been ambiya.
If they were not made ambiya, and the progeny of other ambiya were made ambiya... How could that be that the male progeny of My Habeeb (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) then not be ambiya?"

Another point to ponder over: The masalah of khatme naboowat (finality of prophethood) becomes easy to understand from here also. Zate Bari Taala had no intention to continue the chain of prophethood. This is very perceivable and easy to comprehend. Allah Taala is virtually stating, My Habeeb (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) should have a son and he lives to adulthood, and he is not made a nabi? It would not be possible that with such an exceptional bond existing, where Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is the most honoured prophet and the

Habeeb (Friend) of Allah Taala, but his son, were he to survive, not be made a nabi.

Do you understand this point? The issue is quite clear and easy, that Allah Taala intended to terminate the chain of naboowat, and thus did not allow any male children to survive.

Speaking about Hadhratwala: if he had children, one does not know how they would have turned out to be. And how lofty was not the stature of Hadhratwala (R.A.)! They may well have been the cause of grief to him. So, it happened for the best that he had no children.

16.MARRYING A SECOND WIFE

Similarly, as I have often stated, it was a good thing that Hadhratwala married a second wife. By doing this he has left a lesson for us, that we should not be audacious enough to marry a second wife! The reason? The reason being that we would never be able to treat both wives as fairly and justly as we saw Hadhratwala treat his two wives. This road has been closed for all of us.

I had stated that nisbat (affiliation) is a great thing. We should pay greater and greater attention to that organisation that Hadhratwala had brought into existence, had laid the foundations of.

It is time for the Maghreb azan. If Allah Taala keeps us alive, then, insha-Allah Taala, I will speak again some other time. Make dua that Allah Taala grants us the taufeeq to safeguard our nisbat and fulfil its haq. May He grant us imane kamil and

the taufeeq to perform amalus-saleh. May He grant us firmness and constancy in these, and bless our last moments on these.

17.THE SECOND MAJLIS

/The second majlis took place on the following day, Sunday, 4 Safar.J

Yesterday, a few aspects concerning nisbat (affiliation) were discussed. Nisbat has a special effect. Some episodes were also related in this regard.

The meaning of nisbat is taalluq - to have a connection with. It implies having taalluq from both sides. A one-sided connection cannot be termed taalluq whatsoever! This one-sided connection is merely a deception, making only oneself happy! A correct taalluq which is produced from both sides, is termed nisbat.

EFFECTS OF NISBAT

One finds different types of taalluq: the husbands with the wife; the wifes with the husband; the fathers with the children; the childrens with the father; the masters with his slave; the slaves with his master; etc. Each taalluq is of a different nature: the slaves taalluq with his master will be of a different nature, and the masters taalluq with the slave will be of a different nature; the childrens taalluq with the father will be of a different nature, and the fathers taalluq with the children will be of a different nature; etc. However, the taalluq will be from both sides, and the extent to which there is taalluq, the degree to which there is nisbat, to that extent there will be a strength and force within oneself.

Take another situation: Some professional ranks are of a very insignificant nature. For example, a simple orderly (choprasi) in a government department has no rank or status - it is merely a position. The policeman (chokidar) has also a position, and so has the Governor (Collectorsaheb), but there are vast differences in their ranks. However, each one is also part of the Royal services, and the orderly and policeman consider themselves to be part of the same group as the Governor, who is held in high esteem. So, the policeman will sense within himself a special strength and force, in that he is part of the Royal establishment. Even though he may be wearing a mere policemans uniform, but the uniform will identify him with the Royal establishment. If anybody were to interfere with him while he is still in his official uniform, this person will be guilty of an offence. However, if he is not in his official uniform, but is wearing ordinary civilian clothes, and anybody now interferes with him, that person will not be considered to have committed a criminal offence. The reason is that it is accepted that amongst people there are bound to be squabbles, and these are not worthy of taking note of.

18.UNIFORMS

Every rank has its own distinctive uniform. If a person has one rank, and he dons the uniform of a person of another rank, then also he will be considered to have committed an offence. For example, the army has a uniform, and the police force also has a uniform. In both forces there exists the rank of a captain. Say, the captain in the police force were to don the uniform of a captain in the armed forces, and it so happens that he is then summoned by his superior, the Inspector-General. He then goes to his superior in this uniform of the armed forces. His superior will

have cause for amazement when he sees him thus. I sent for a captain from the police force. Why has a captain from the armed forces come? The captain will be interrogated and when his wilful change of uniform becomes known he will be charged for having committed an offence. He will not be able to say in his defence, This uniform is of the Royal services, and so is that. There are distinctive differences between the two. His having committed an offence will be confirmed, and he will also be reprimanded, Are you trying to interfere with the laws and regulations? How is one to recognise that you are a captain in the police force?

So, in whichever direction one has ones nisbat and taalluq, that connection and affiliation has also to show itself. By showing itself one will be able to recognise the type of taalluq the person has. This nisbat may sometimes be weak, sometimes it may be strong, and sometimes very strong. Sometimes it is at an intermediate level, and sometimes it is at a very elevated level. And who is it who does not know that in every field the objective is to attain the highest level? So, from this aspect, taking nisbat into consideration, when a person has stated, with a sincere heart (tasdeeqe-qalbi) as well as verbally (iqrare-lisani):

- that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, and that Muhammmed (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is the Rasul of Allah -

then he has revealed that taalluq with a statement uttered previously. That is, when he was in the Alime Barzakh, and he was asked - Am I not your Rab? - he then responded - Verily! By this exclamation he has acknowledged Rabubiyet and disclosed Rabubiyet. Just see, Haq Taala had asked - Am I not your Rab? - and not - "Am I not your

Deity.¿ By using the term Rab Haq Taala has clearly indicated His complete and absolute taalluq with His bandah on the basis of being his Creator. The term Rab means to create and sustain. So, by having asked, Am I not your Rab? and our voices having rung out, Verily! (i.e. You are definitely our Rab!) Haq Taala had obtained our acknowledgment and acceptance of His attribute of Takween - of being our Creator and Sustainer. So, now, after having come into this dunya, the manifestation of that attestation from the aspect of tashree (shariat) is in the form of the attestation of La Ilaha Illallahu Muhammadur Rasulullah

We are being explicitly shown, Takween is in My control, takween is with Me, and takween is aligned to Me, so, too, tashree is fully and completely aligned to Me! Takween is to be found in the answer of Kaloo Balaa in response to Ilastu Birabbikum; and tashree is to be found in La Ilaha Illallahu Muhammadur Rasulullah

19.TASHREE

In this way we have been made responsible for the full and complete tashree. Now understand what tashree means: tashree implies abdiyet and maboodiyet. That is, from the side of the servant the acknowledgment and acceptance of his abdiyet (servitude) and the maboodiyet (bondage) to the Creator. This is at the level of attestation of tashree and Divinity as contained in the Kalimah Tayyibah. However, just staying at this level shows a very weak nisbat. This is a very weak taalluq. This is not a strong connection. It is merely a basic or primary taalluq. Another name for it is Taqwa Tauheedi, which means that by this declaration and

attestation one has left off shirk and kufr, and one has accepted tauheed. The wajib (compulsory) right that Allah Taala has on one from the aspect of takween (His being the Creator) one has fulfilled at the basic level of tashree. This Allah Taala has mentioned in His Kalame Pak:

0 ye who believe! Do not betray - i.e. fall short in fulfilling the rights of - Allah Taala and His Rasul (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)..... S.8 A.27

Ponder a bit! Allah Taala is addressing us, and saying, You have left off kufr and shirk, and have accepted iman (that is, accepted tauheed, together with the attributes [sifat] of Allah Taala). This is one right that has been fulfilled. You now have a responsibility. So, the meaning of the verse would be as follows: 0 ye who believe! Do not fall short in fulfilling the rights of Allah Taala and His Rasul (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), and let there, also, not be shortcomings in those items that are in your custody. That is, there must be no misappropriation in trusts and securities.

So, having abstained from shirk and kufr, having shed these, you have accepted haq (truth) - i.e. tauheed. This has laid the foundation of taqwa. The foundation of taqwa is leaving off shirk and kufr. However, this is a weak nisbat, a feeble nisbat. It is now necessary for it to gain some strength and force. Notwithstanding the fact that this nisbat is weak, yet at its level, it is also a stage of wilayet (being a wali [friend] of Allah Taala), as Allah Taala states,

Allah is the Friend of those who believe. S.2 A.257

That is, those who have brought only iman, they have also been called wali. However, this level of wilayet is a weak one. It is obvious that ones objective is to attain the strongest or highest levels. Hence, those huqooq (rights) which come after and are linked, until one has not become firmly attached to these, until proper nisbat has not been attained to these, until they are not fulfilled at a level of complete perfection, until then kamil wilayet will not be attained.

20.RECOGNISING KAMIL WILAYET

How does one recognise kamil wilayet - perfection as far as wilayet is concerned? How can one perceive which individual has attained kamil wilayet and who has not? This, too, has to be asked of Haq Taala. Our explaining and commenting will not achieve anything. Haq Taala states:

Verily, only the muttaqoon are the auliya. S.8 A.34

This is in reply to the question: Who are the auliya? Answer: Only those who are muttaqi! The two are interchangeable: Question: Who are the muttaqi? Answer: They are the auliya! The muttaqi are called auliya, and the auliya are called muttaqi.

So, wilayete-ammah - ordinary/ common wilayet - as stated previously, is a weak state, after which there are stages of increased strength, as Haq Taala states elsewhere:

S.10 3.62-63

Ala! This means, "Listen with open ears! Be informed! Be alert!

Then comes the word Irma, which emphasises: This is a fact, this is a true

statement. And what is that? Auliya-Allah, that the friends of Allah, what are the effects they reveal? La khaufun alayhim, that in their hearts they have no fear for anybody. (That is, mentally.) Wala yahzanoon. And they do not become depressed. When anything happens contrary to their temperament they do not feel grieved. And who are these people? Allazeena amanu wa kanu yattaqoon. Those who believe and have taqwa. Here, after the word amanu comes the phrase wa kanu yattaqoon. It is obvious that after amanu there is something else that is required before the effects of la khaufun alayhim wala yahzanoon can become applicable. This effect of la khaufun alayhim wala yahzanoon will only become applicable in that person in whom, after weak iman, strong and forceful iman has been developed. Otherwise, what was the necessity of mentioning wa kanu yattaqoon after amanu? The reason becomes obvious that after amanu something else also has to follow.

21.LEVELS OF NISBAT

After stating all this, it must also be understood that nisbat has different levels: Weak, strong, and very strong.

At the first level, after bringing iman, the taqwa that is present is that which is a means of discarding shirk and kufr.

After this there comes a higher stage, that, after having brought iman, one has to abstain from major (kabeerah) sins. Having attained this, there is now force and strength in that nisbat.

22.KHAMR AND KIBR

It is to be noted that sins are connected to the zahir as well as the batin. For example, take the of drinking khamr, i.e. alcohol: this is a sin connected to the zahir. So, he has now left off drinking, but kibr (arrogance), which is connected to,the batin, he has not discarded! When he took the step of stopping the drinking of khamr, similarly is it not wajib and necessary for him to discard kibr as well? Both have the same status (the one intoxicates the physical body, the other intoxicates the nafs.) It becomes obvious that the khamr that he has stopped drinking is not due to the khauf (fear) of Allah Taala, but it is due to family status and considerations. Others will taunt and tease him, so he feels ashamed. He has a sense of modesty. If he had left off drinking khamr out of the khauf of Allah Taala, then this khauf of Allah Taala should also have eliminated the kibr that is brimming over within him. Relative to leaving off khamr more concern should have been given to eliminating kibr. But he does not! Why? Because the kibr within is not a visible item that others can see, therefore this person does not feel ashamed or bashful, he does not feel disgraced. Whereas in drinking khamr, others will come to know, and he will be shamed. Others will tease and taunt him. So it is obvious that he has left off drinking khamr for worldly considerations, and not because of khaufe-ilahi, and not because of his taalluqe-nisbat. This iman is weak. This is not the effect that strong iman has.

And what was stated just now, that it is more imperative to eliminate kibr than it is to abstain from khamr, is because of the following:

The person himself feels ashamed of drinking khamr. He is aware of the indignity

it is associated with. Also, the intoxicating effect of drinking khamr is relatively short-lived. Whereas the intoxicating effect of kibr will increase and increase, in proportion to the availability of the causes of aggrandizement - the jah, the takabbur!

Just ponder! If a person has real, meaningful khauf, then, together with abstaining from the zahiri forbidden and haram acts, he will also abstain from what is haram as far as the batini forbidden and haram acts are concerned.

Also, it is possible that the imbiber of khamr may be forgiven, but it can never happen that a mutakabbir - one puffed up with kibr - who leaves this world while he is still filled with kibr, will be forgiven!

It has come in the Hadith shareef that that person who has kibr in him, even to the size of a grain of rye, will not be entered into Jannat. Ponder a bit! There is khamr, and there is kibr. There are many amongst mankind who are safe and protected from khamr. However, as for kibr, possibly there may be that rare person who will be free of this! This kibr is such a bala (disastrous quality), that even though one concentrates fully on removing it, it comes out so slowly that a lengthy duration of time passes by before it is removed. Also, until a complete cure is not undertaken, until then it will not be eliminated.

If somebody desires that his tarbiyet (rectification of his character) be done by means of ilm, or by means of ibadat, and that his islah will be made, and he desires that kibr should be removed from within him, this is impossible in the normal course of events.

23.A LESSON FROM SHAITAN

May Allah Taala bless Shaitan! (This is one way of expressing it!) For Shaitan has left us an exemplary lesson! He has not done anything for himself. Whatever transgression he committed is a different issue. However, he has left us a very huge lesson, in that he has proclaimed, 0 ye group of scholars (ulema)! 0 ye group of worshippers (abeds)! Just look at me! Was I in any way deficient in knowledge (ilm)? Why do scholars become overawed with my knowledge? Why are they terrified? Did I lack in knowledge in any way? I had abundant ilm! Did I lack in any way as far as ibadat is concerned? My ibadat was unlimited! You cannot possibly make as much ibadat! Thousands of years I prostrated with my head in sajdah!

Yes, he had even performed ibadat for thousands of years. So, what was lacking? The answer is: There was no tarbiyet! And the factor that was an obstacle to tarbiyet was takabbur! That is why I am saying that he has left us a lesson, and has shown us that it is impossible that merely through teaching and learning (taleem and taallum) kibr will go away, and that through more and more ibadat kibr will go away. This just cannot happen. Just look at me! is what Shaitan is telling us.

As more and more zahiri means arise for performing good, so, too does takabbur increase: as there is progress in ilm, so too does takabbur increase; as ibadat increases, so too does takabbur increase; as the means of worldly progress increase, so too does takabbur increase. As long as the special and specific measures are not adopted to remove the intoxicating effects of the sins of the batin, this intoxication will not disappear.This nisbat is weak. This nisbat is a feeble

connection.

Allah Taala states, 0 ye believers! Do not be deficient in fulfilling the rights of Allah and His Rasul!

24.THE RIGHTS OF MUHABBAT AND KHAUF

What are these rights?

The rights are many: For example, the rights of muhabbat, and the rights of khauf. So, what are the demands of muhabbat, and what are the demands of khauf?

Take muhabbat: Muhabbat should have a number of effects following in its wake. This means, for example, that muhabbat demands that whatever deeds, whatever amal, that we have been ordered to carry out, they should be carried out in the easiest of manner, in the most simplified way. With muhabbat a mere hint (isharah) from the Mahboob, the Loved One, is sufficient. It should not be that even as far as clear and straightforward orders are concerned there are blatant deficiencies!

Among the clear-cut and indisputable orders is that of performing namaz. So, is it a demand of muhabbat that this explicit and binding order should be neglected? This is a sign of a very weak and feeble taalluq. Very appropriately has the poet said,

In front of the house stands the masjid, but it is not frequented; Selfish - unaware or unconscious - in this world, in that
Allah Taala is not remembered!

To continue: At a different place Zate Bari Taala states:

0 ye who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not save as those who have surrendered (unto Him). S.3 A.102

The stage after iman is taqwa, and the demand of taqwa is haqqe-taqwa, which means, to abstain from major sins, and to abstain from minor sins as well. And this process has to continue until one abstains also from that which is doubtful. A Hadith shareef in Bukhari shareef states:

What is halal is clear and what is haram is clear; and inbetween the two is what is doubtful. Stay away from what is doubtful.

The word Fastanzihuwa is derived from the root word nazhat, which means to be away from. In other words: Until you cannot save yourselves from what is doubtful, you will not develop any cleanliness or elegance in your iman.

Why has the order being given that we should save ourselves from that which is doubtful? The reason is that there should develop in ones nisbat and bond a special force and strength. Until one does not also abstain from what is doubtful, until then that force and strength is not worthy of being termed force and strength in the true meaning of these words. This I referred to earlier when I stated that nisbat has different degrees: weak, strong, and very strong.

So, those venerable persons on whom this effect of nisbat has taken a hold, they take care and vigilance from way ahead to abstain from what is doubtful (mushtabahat). Not only do they carry out the rights of what is wajib, but they are also vigilant about the rights of what is optional (mustahab).

Now, take the word mustahab. The infinitive of this word is istihbab, whose root is hub. The meaning of hub is muhabbat(love), and when there is hub-fillah (love of Allah Taala), then its effects will be seen in the zahir and batin. So, it now becomes obvious that whosoever has muhabbat for Zate Bari Taala will rot be contented with safeguarding merely the wajib rights on him, but the urge and demand that this muhabbat will have will be for him to fulfil what is mustahab - whose root is hub - as well.

Similarly, that person who has khauf (fear of Allah Taala) will abstain not only from what is clearly demarcated in nusoos (Quran shareef and Hadith shareef) as haram, but he will also abstain from all that which is considered to be doubtful as to being halal or haram, according to strong evidence and the principles of the shariat.

This nisbat will be strong or very strong, as we have seen from glimpses of the lives of our auliya-Allah.

25.THE TWO WATERMELONS BROUGHT BY A VILLAGER

An incident is related concerning our Hadhrat, Peer and Murshid, Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Thanvi (R.A.):

Once, a villager came to him and presented him with two watermelons. Hadhratwala (R.A.) asked, Why did you bring two? What was the necessity? You could have brought just one. The villager replied, Why, dont you have two wives? That is why I brought two. Being a countryman, he had a simple an informal manner of speaking. One is for the one wife, and the other is for the other.

Hadhratwala (R.A.) said, That seems to be in order. However, if the weight of one watermelon is more, and the weight of the other is less, then one wife will receive the one that is greater in weight, and the other will receive the one that is lesser in weight. This will be contrary to fairness and justice, because there is no equality between the two. And the order (of the shariat) is that there should be equality. Hadhratwala (R.A.) was well known in the matter of dealing with equality between his wives. The villager appeared unperturbed. He said, I know you, therefore I have brought you two that are equal in weight. If you dont believe me weigh them in that scale of yours.

Hadhratwala (R.A.) kept a scale nearby. Whatever he sent to his wives he used to carefully weigh equally before sending the items to them. If any item was tied with a piece of string, he used to cut even the string in half, sending each half to each one.

Hadhratwala (R.A.) told the villager, That wont be necessary. You are a Muslim. Since you have stated that I should verify on my scale the weights as being equal, then it is obvious the weights of the two are equal. But, dear saheb, there is one other matter - let me clarify that as well: If one watermelon is less sweet, and the other is sweeter, then the sweeter one will go to the one and the one that is less sweet will go to the other. So, where is the fairness? Where is there equality? The villager, quite abashed, said, I did not dive into them! How should I know which one is less sweeter and which one not? That you decide. Hadhratwala (R.A.) said, Fine. Bring both to the scale. The villager picked up both the watermelons and took them to the scale. Hadhratwala (R.A.) went over, took out a knife, and,

judging carefully and accurately, marked each watermelon in the middle. He then cut both of them, taking half of each, placed them on one pan of the scale, and the remaining two halves he placed in the other pan. They balanced. Choudrey-saheb! The sweet and the less sweet, both are now combined. They have also been weighed equally. Now, even in the matter of sweetness there is equality. Is everything in order now? The villager exclaimed, You cut very fine points! That is to say that Hadhratwala (R.A.) went to a tremendous amount of effort in such a petty matter. Hadhratwala (R.A.) replied, Choudrey-saheb! The effort and trouble incurred in this world is nothing compared to that which we will have to face in the Hereafter!

You see the effect of khauf and khashiyet? We were shown in a practical manner what khauf is, what khashiyet is. The Quran shareef states:

Verily, the learned ('ulema) among His bondmen fear Allah alone. S.35 A.28

Innama is there to add emphasis. When a person has abstained from what is haram in his zahiri actions because of khauf, then the effect of that khauf should be evidenced in his batin also. He should abstain from what is haram with regard to the batin as well. Just as there will be a reckoning on the drinking of khamr, there will be a reckoning on takabbur as well. Just as the former has to be discarded, the latter also has to be discarded. In actual fact, it is more important to discard the batini ill of takabbur. Gheebat (back-biting) is an evil of the batin. What is its basis? It is takabbur. So, a person may have abstained from zina (adultery/ fornication) - zina being a haram zahiri act - but gheebat, which is a batini haram

and forbidden act, he has not discarded! Of these two, to discard the one and not the other, what is the reason for this differentiation?

26.AN INCIDENT CONCERNING HUQOOQS

Speaking about khauf, I am reminded of an incident concerning huqooqs (rights), related to us by Hadhratwala (R.A.). Possibly this talk is being relayed to the womenfolk as well, so they should also listen attentively. It is related in the Hadith shareef that a Sahabi (R.A.) became ill. He took a turn for the worse, and it was feared that he would not live long. This Sahabi (R.A.) sent another Sahabi (R.A.) to his married daughter, Go and tell her that her fathers condition is serious. He has an inner longing to see her. Please come. This Sahabi (R.A.) went to the daughter and passed on the message. The daughter replied, My husband has gone out, having given me the instruction that, until he returns, I am not to set my foot outside the house. How can I go? Ask Huzoor Akram (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), and if he were to give permission, then I shall go. Otherwise, I shall abide by the prohibition of my husband.

After getting married, the rights of the husband take precedence over the rights of the mother and father. In order to be able to fulfil rights (huqooq) correctly, one requires a great deal of ilm (knowledge). And mere ilm, in itself, is also not sufficient, because ilm will create only an awareness, but in order to act one requires ilm-e-kamil. What is ilm-e-kamil? It is that ilm that is associated with an intuitive force and fervour (zoqo-wajadan) that motivates one into action. And that which does not motivate one into action, cannot be termed knowledge (ilm).

Ponder: If one possesses an item to perform a particular function, but it is not utilised as such, of what use is it?

The Sahabi (R.A.) went to Huzoor Akram (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, Because the husband has forbidden her, therefore it is not permissible (na-jaez) for her to go. The Sahabiyah (R.A.) did not go.

Some time later somebody else came to her with the message, His condition is very serious. If you wish to see his face, go now. The daughter gave the same reply as on the previous occasion. Huzoor Akram (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) gave the same answer as well, It is not jaez for her to go. Her husband has forbidden her, that she is not allowed to set her foot outside. Her father passed away. A Sahabi (R.A.) brought her the news, Now he has passed away. Now go and see him. She again repeated what she had said earlier, Go and ask Huzoor Akram (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Huzoor Akram (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, Even now it is not jaez. So that even now she did not go.

Do you see the state of her iman? Do you see the nisbat? This was the effect of the taalluq that had been established with Zate Haq Taala.
She did not go. After passing away, ghusl was given, and the kafan was wrapped and he was buried. Thereafter Huzoor Akram (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) returned home. Hadhrat Jibraeel (A.S.) descended and said, Allah Taala conveys to you His salam. And He has also says that convey to that girl the message that what she had done in observance of the rights of her husband, in observance of the shariat, that by this action of hers Allah Taala is so happy with her, that by virtue of her deed,

He has forgiven her father!

Ponder! This is fulfilling rights, which results from khaufe-Haq! This can be termed fulfilling rights, in the real sense of the word. If she had gone to see her father she would have shed two or three more tears. However, the rights that she fulfilled through the effect of khauf and khashiyet by acting as she did, this is in reality correct knowledge (saheeh ilm). Real khauf, in the true meaning of the word, should have an effect as far as what is haram and forbidden externally (zahiri), and even more so it should have an effect on the batin. Actually, this abstention from haram is subservient and subordinate to the taqwa of the batin.

27.CLOTHES OF TAQWA

To understand this, look at the clothes we are wearing. These clothes cover our body externally, and is an offshoot of the taqwa of the batin. As Zate Bari Taala states in the Quran shareef:

And the garments of taqwa are best of all. S.7 3.26

So, if we do not have any taqwa, then these outer clothes also fall off.

Similarly, these eyes that are set in our head, are our zahiri eyes. We also have an eye in the heart. If the eye in the heart visualises something, then that item will be visualised by the external eyes as well. For example: If the inner eye has hijab and shame and modesty in it, then the external eyes will also have purdah in them. When there is no purdah of the heart, then there will be no purdah of the eyes as well. It is incorrect to state, The purdah of the heart is there - what is the necessity to make purdah of the eyes? Remember well that, if there is haya and sharam

(modesty and shame) and hijab in the heart, then there will definitely be purdah of the eyes as well. Not having purdah of the eyes is evidence and proof that there is shamelessness and lack of hijab in the heart. If there is khauf of Zate Bari Taala in the heart, then the eyes will make purdah when the individual leaves the house. And if the heart has no khauf of Zate Bari Taala, then the eyes also will not make purdah.

Take note of this ayet of the Quran shareef:

Allah knoweth that which they keep hidden; and that which they proclaim. Verily, He is aware of what is in the breast (of men)! S.1 1 A.5

Note well: Allah Taala is aware of your movements outside, and He is aware of your staying in your homes as well.

Having been informed of the above, what should one bear in mind? The following: that when you set your foot outside, ponder as to why you have set your foot outside. Set out with this concept in mind that Allah Taala is saying, You have with you certain of My trusts. These five parts of your body are My trusts, which you have been made responsible to guard: The eyes, the ears, the tongue, the limbs, and the heart. The custody of the eye is that you look at what you have been told to look at; and what We have forbidden you to look at, do not look at it. So,if we have utilised the eyes to look at gair-mahrams, then this is contrary to khauf, it is contrary to taqwa. It is apparent then, that taqwa may be present, but it is a weak taqwa, and not a strong taqwa. If strong taqwa was present, then its effect would be as follows: Allah Taala has stated that He knows your movements outside, and also

your activities in your homes. Then, when setting your foot outside your house, it would be with this awareness, this khauf, this thought: The aforementioned parts of my body should not be utilised wrongfully!

What is termed as being real khauf and real taqwa, lasts not only for two or three days, but is ever present. Haq Taala states:

...and die not save as those who have surrendered (unto Him).
S.3 3.102
That is, fulfill the haq of taqwa until the time of death.

We had stated that nisbat and taalluq are great things. Yesterday the talk was on nisbat, and some incidents were also related. Nisbat can be weak, or it can be strong, or very strong. The objective is to develop a very strong nisbat, and that very strong nisbat is an objective till the time of death. In connection with this, I had related an incident concerning Hadhratwala (R.A.), to demonstrate what the effects of khauf really are: Did the wives know who received what? Did they know what the weight of the watermelons were? Would they have known who received less or more? Would they have known who received the sweet watermelon and who received the one not so sweet? Who was there to see?

If one were to ask any Muslim, Is it your itiqad (belief) that Allah Taala is hadhir-nazir (omnipresent)? what will his answer be? Definitely! Without doubt, Allah Taala is hadhir-nazir. This belief is at the intellectual level, whereas the objective is to have this aqeedah (belief) at the level of hal (state/ condition). This means that the aqeedah that Allah Taala is hadhir-nazir (omnipresent) should have the effect

that in every action this belief should be manifest and evident. The effects of muhabbat will be evident on the basis of nisbat - that, to the extent of the nisbat, to that degree will be seen the effects of muhabbat. In the same way, the different effects of khauf will be evident proportionate to the degree of nisbat one has.

Concerning nisbat, some issues were discussed yesterday, and today too. The rest, insha-Allah Taala, will be discussed on some other occasion.

(As it was time for Maghreb, dua was made, and the majlis ended)

28.THE THIRD MAJLIS

/The third majlis took place on the following day, Monday, 5 Safar.J

Yesterday and the day before we spoke on the subject of nisbat - the taalluq of that affiliation, and its effects.

WHO SHOULD ONE LISTEN TO?

Who is the person speaking, and what should he be like? Also, what should be the condition of those who are listening?

To listen to all and sundry [i.e. every Tom, Dick an Harry], and for such persons to deliver lectures, is contrary to the rules and principles in the Quran shareef. The principle in the Quran shareef is as follows: That person who has in him two qualities, can be listened to without putting forward any whys? and wherefores?, any ifs and buts. Proof of this is in the Quran shareef. In Surah Yaseen, in the second ruku, Allah Taala has related a qissah, which, briefly, is as follows: Zate Bari Taala sent two Rasuls to Antioch for the hidayet (guidance) of the people. As

on previous occasions in the past, the habit of the people was to oppose any Rasul sent to them, and to harass such a Rasul, to such an extent that a Rasul would be killed as well. The people were not prepared to listen to the haq (truth). When batil (falsehood) becomes so forcefully ingrained, then the ears and the heart cease to place any importance to the words of Haq Taala.

So, this community also opposed these two Rasuls, and were on the point of killing them. At this point Zate Bari Taala sent to them a third Rasul, in order to support and assist these two. However, the community behaved in the same manner to this third Rasul as well. A youth, Habeeb Najar, a carpenter, had brought iman on the guidance of these Rasuls. He lived some distance from the town. When he came to hear that this is the manner in which his community was behaving towards these Rasuls, the poor fellow, overcome with dread, came running to their aid and protection. He said,

He said, 0 my people! Follow those who have been sent! Follow those who ask of you no fee, and who are rightly guided." S.36 A.20-21

As if to say, 0 my people! What has happened to you that you are opposing these Rasuls? There is absolutely no reason for opposing them, but, on the contrary, the opposite should be the case. That is to say, looking at it from the worldly point of view, there are two qualities, hubbe mal (love of wealth) and hubbe jah (love of fame/ prestige), where a representative may do a certain piece of work for these objectives. Both these qualities are based on selfish and personal motives. And these Rasuls do not have these selfish motives. Their shan (dignified and noble

status) is this that they desire no remuneration. They are not asking for any compensation. They desire no material return for their service. They are inviting you purely for the cause of Lillahiyet, for your own welfare. They are calling you to what is a protection and safeguard against danger, and is a means of attaining benefit. And they do not ask for any material reward or compensation, which would be obstacles to listening to such individuals.

Individuals expecting material benefits may be suspected of doing so for personal gain. As we see these days that there is a flood of fund-raisers. If the villagers come to know that this person has primarily come to raise funds, and the waz (lecture), etc. are merely incidental events, then they may even sit and listen to the talk as an act of politeness, but nobody is prepared to listen with the heart. Some, who are free in their speech, will finally even voice this thought, Maulana! When this was your purpose, then why did you make us sit so long, and vex us unnecessarily? You should have said that you have come to collect funds for such-and-such a madrasah, and we would have given you whatever. So you see! Where did they listen? Everything gone to waste! The monetary motive was detected!

The youth argued further, That is the first point. The second point is that they are muhtada. These are such that they are on the correct Path. They are sahebe-siratam-mustaqeem and sahebe-ihtida. So, they do not possess one quality (i.e. ulterior motives) and they do possess the noble quality of ihtidayet (i.e. being rightly guided), and when the obstacles do not exist, then what prevents you from listening to their message?

We can see that what this youth is saying is absolutely correct, because this is

being related by Zate Bari Taala, in that He is saying that one should look at the person to see if he has selfish or ulterior motives or not, whether he is desirous of mal (wealth) or jah (name and prestige). These are two qualities which are obstacles in listening to, and accepting, what a person has to say. When these two qualities have been negated, and they are on correct hidayet (guidance) themselves, then there are no reasons for not listening to them. Also, for greater reassurance, look at their characters and conduct, their dealings, their social lifestyles, etc. In other words, look at them from the aspects of ibadat, muamalat, muasharat, and akhlaq. These are the criteria on which to assess and judge people. And, after being scrutinised, if these qualities are present in the manner they should be, then there is no reason for not listening to them. The presence of these qualities within them will a proof of their taqwa, that they have an extreme level of taqwa. And a muttaqi is one who has solicitude for others in this world and also in the hereafter.

29.FRIENDS: WORLDLY AND MUTTAQI

Proof of this appears in the Quran shareef. Haq Taala states:

Friends on that Day will be foes one unto another, save those who are muttaqi.
S.43 A.67

Haq Taala states that these worldly friends will, on the day of Qiyamat, be enemies one unto the other. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) also forbade us from making friends of such people. For himself, too, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) desired friends, but... Note the tone! Note the desire! Note the quest!

0 Allah! Bless me with Your muhabbat and the muhabbat of that person whose muhabbat, in Your eyes, will be of benefit to me!

Also:

0 Allah! I am desirous of Your muhabbat and the muhabbat of that person who has muhabbat for You!

These are the criteria and the yardsticks for making friends! There is no question of making just anyone a friend! See, Haq Taala has stated that, on the day of Qiyamat, that friend who lays claim to be a friend in this world, may turn out to be your enemy! You may find somebody saying, Janab! Do not give it a thought! Where you shed your perspiration, I am ready to shed my blood! This is mere lip service. There is no reality in it. It does not come from the heart. It is a mere cliche.

A qissah:
If one were to search for this quality, one would find it only in a real muttaqi. Our Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Thanvi (R.A.) related a qissah:

A particular sheikh one day had a sudden desire for eating kheer - kheer is a dish prepared by rice being boiled in milk and sweetened with sugar. However, he did not have all the ingredients available. Some days passed and it so happened that some milk arrived. The two khadims (attendants) who stayed with the sheikh, informed the sheikh, Hadhrat! Some milk has arrived! We have with us some sugar, and we also have some rice. You had also expressed the wish to eat some kheer. Therefore, grant us permission to prepare some kheer for you. The sheikh replied, Go ahead! The khadims placed some rice in the milk and set the pot on the

fire to cook. As it cooked the milk boiled up to the top of the pot, and the two khadims, not wanting the milk to spill over, skimmed off the top with a spoon and sipped it up. When the kheer was made, it was dished out in a plate, allowed to cool slightly, and then served to the sheikh. The sheikh scooped up a spoonful and brought it to his mouth, but stopped himself from eating it. The khadims were watching, and coaxed the sheikh, Huzoor! After much longing this kheer is now available, and you are not eating it? The sheikh replied, How can I eat it? I perceive the odour of theft emanating from it! The khadims exclaimed, Theft! But nobody came here! And we ourselves boiled the milk, and added the sugar and the rice. We prepared the kheer with our own hands!

However, there exists a certain exquisiteness, a discernment and sagacity, qualities resulting from correct taqwa and an abundance of zikr. Mind you, mere abundance of zikr is not sufficient. An abundance of zikr and correct taqwa have certain effects, through which these qualities can be recognised. Which reminds me of the qissah of Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (R.A.):

Another qissah:
It was a hot summers day. He felt thirsty... By the way, this was related to us by Hadhratwala (R.A.). As a poet put it, The tongue is mine, but the talk is his.

To continue: When the hot summer winds blow it is pleasurable to drink water from earthen goblets. The earthen water pot was kept nearby, and on it was placed the drinking goblet. The khadim (attendant) poured some water into the goblet and served it to Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (R.A.). When he touched his

lips to the goblet he commented, The smell of corpses is coming from this goblet! It appears this clay is from the qabrastan (cemetery)! Among any student group there are some students who are very keen and enthusiastic, and have a very strong urge to investigate, and so it should be. So, immediately a student ran to the potter from whom the earthenware was bought. He asked the potter, Where did you obtain the clay for the last batch of earthen pots and dishes you made? The potter replied, somewhat embarrassed, You see, the weather was not too good. The rains had started. I secretly went to the qabrastan at night and brought the clay from there, and made the dishes from that clay. The clay was from there.

Look at the changes that were made to the original clay - water was added, then the clay was shaped into utensils, then these were dried in the sun and air, and finally placed in an oven where the heat of the fire baked them. Despite all these changes taking place, when the goblet was lifted to his mouth Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (R.A.) observed, The smell of corpses is coming from this goblet! It appears as if this clay is from the qabrastan!

This is the exquisite and finely attuned temperaments of such individuals! You can now gauge the degree of their perceptiveness. Now, when people of different temperaments present themselves and say things contrary to their temperaments, what degree of pain and grief do they not cause? However, these Allahwala personalities also have a tremendous degree of hilm (forbearance), and they will not utter a single word of annoyance - except where it is an occasion for tarbiyet (rectifying a salek) - so that the feelings of the person addressing them is taken into

consideration. This person should not be embarrassed. If the internal faults of the person were to be disclosed, he would sense it and feel humiliated.

Coming back to the buzurg and the kheer: When he had lifted the spoonful of kheer to his lips he had remarked, I perceive the odour of theft emanating frcm it! The astonished khadims tried very hard to reassure him that nobody had come there who could possibly have stolen from the kheer, that they had prepared the kheer with their own hands, while they themselves were present. The sheikh was adamant and would not eat the kheer. The two khadims finally gave up, and fell into thought. Suddenly it struck them, Is it not possible that the overflowing milk which we had skimmed off, and drunk, without Hadhrats permission, that this is included in the category of theft? Immediately they got up and informed the sheikh, Huzoor! The milk that was boiling over, we skimmed the top and drunk it. The sheikh replied, But this is exactly what I was referring to all the time!

This is the way these personages speak! Their statements are innocent and guileless, sweet and charming!

So far, so good. However, for their error the khadims had to be penalised. This was not such a crime that it could not be forgiven. The milk was drunk, and that was it. But no! The purpose and object is islah for the future. At times an incident is very trivial, but its underlying basis may be very grave. And these personages do not look at the act only, but more at the underlying basis. The penalty will be according to that.

30.PUNISHMENT IS FOR ISLAH

Another qissah:

You may have heard that there was a khadim, Gulam Ali by name, staying in attendance to Hadhrat Mirza Mazhar Janjana (R.A.). One day he was fanning Hadhrat Mirza Mazhar Janjana (R.A.), fanning him very, very gently with a hand fan, with this thought in mind, My sheikh has an extremely sensitive temperament, I must not irritate him. Possibly hardly any breeze reached his sheikh. Hadhrat Mirza Mazhar Janjana (R.A.) exclaimed, Dont you have any life in your arm? Gulam Ali began fanning vigorously, upon which Hadhrat Mirza Mazhar Janjana (R.A.) exclaimed, What! Are you now trying to blow me away? Gulam Ali muttered under his breath, Neither is this good enough, nor that! These words, although muttered very softly, were loud enough to reach the ears of the sheikh. Set the fan down here! he ordered harshly. Leave the khanqah! Gulam Ali did as he was commanded. He set the fan down and left the khanqah.

Outwardly, was it really such a big crime that he had to stop fanning his sheikh and be expelled from the khanqah? Try and do this nowadays and shaitan will cause the person to run away! But those people were of a different calibre. Where would he run to? No! He apologised. He asked to be forgiven. He pleaded and entreated, he petitioned and begged. Finally, when the sheikh saw that, yes, the islah of the nafs has been made, the lesson had gone to his heart, that it was firmly embedded, then he was forgiven. He was recalled to the khanqah. The object was islah, and that had been achieved.

At this moment sitting in front of me are my children. [Tulaba from the Jamiah Ashrafiyah were present.] My temperament is also that of a student of Deen, and I live with my students in a very informal way, so much so that some of my peerbhais, and others from my own silsilah, keep on admonishing me that it is not appropriate that I live with the students in such a manner. I tend to be very, very informal. I fully accept what these well-wishers have to say, but the problem is that this pattern of behaviour has become second nature to me. How is it possible that it will now change in my old age?

In any case, let us continue. On one occasion, when Hadhratwala (R.A.) related this incident concerning Hadhrat Mirza Mazhar Janjana (R.A.) to us in a majlis, a Maulana saheb posed the question, Hadhrat! Gulam Ali Shah did not commit any such grave error, but his punishment was unduly severe. That is something I do not understand. Hadhratwala (R.A.) replied, What have the molvis studied? Yes, they know how to raise objections! You and I will object, but, in reality, the sheikh had captured the underlying cause of the error. What went through his mind was the following, Oho! There is still some deficiency in his islah! My comments that he has no life in his arm, and then that he is trying to blow me away, caused a heaviness, a burden, in his temperament. He felt annoyed. This annoyance was such that he could not even contain himself, and he had to blurt out that neither is this good enough, nor that! What is the underlying basis for this reaction? It shows provocation. Even though there are no flames, live embers are definitely present! Would you consider it permissible to place live embers in your clothes cupboard? Or, if somebody were to try to place live embers amongst your clothes, would you

tolerate it? It is obvious that you would never allow it, because, even as flames will do their work (i.e. burn your clothes to ashes) rapidly, live embers will do the very same: they may take long to blaze up, but when the clothes catch alight, that is the end! So, the sheikh immediately understood, The live embers of razeelah ghussah (blameworthy anger) are present, a flame is still present. If, by my remarks, the embers and flames blazed up, then, were he to meet up with any situation contrary to his temperament when he is away from here, one does not know what devastation he will wrought when these flames of ghussah blaze up again! These are the ramifications of islah! For you and I, these are petty issues, but as far as these personages are concerned these are grave and important matters. They desire to create such individuals - especially if the individuals have already created a close relationship - that there should be no sign or vestige of ghussah. They wish to create individuals who are a manifestation of the attributes (sifat) of Zate Bari Taala, that the quality of hilm (forbearance), and not mere tahallum, is produced in those connected to them.

31.HILM AND TAHALLUM

Ponder a moment. There is a difference between hilm and tahallum. Tahallum has the connotation of difficulty in its meaning. In other words, when somebody says anything contrary to the persons temperament, he stops himself from retaliating, but only because of some expediency, and only by exerting some force on himself, but still rankling within himself. On the other hand, hilm means that the person is completely indifferent: he does not even react within himself; he is completely deaf.

So, these personages wish to raise those connected to them to this level. So much so, that if a bhangi (a sweeper who removes the nightsoil) or his female counterpart, were to drop a basket of faeces on his head, there would be absolutely no trace of ghussah! Thus, in our opinion we feel that what grave error did Gulam Ali commit that he was meted out such a severe punishment? However, ask the sheikh! Ask the roohani physician! He recognised that, in one who was especially close to him, there were still embers of ghussah! There is still a flaring up! There is the necessity for islah still. After some time, when he had assessed that the embers had been removed, he gave him permission to return. Gulam Ali came back.

We were speaking about the theft of milk. The sheikh said, There should be some punishment. The khadims replied, Huzoor! Whatever you deem fit! The sheikh said, Go and stand in the sun. In the heat of summer he made them stand exposed to the blazing sun. People like us would have run away! However, these two went to stand in the sun. Soon, the perspiration started dripping on the ground because of the heat. After a short while the sheikh asked, Do you wish to say something? The two khadims did not have the courage to speak on their own, to ask to be forgiven, so the sheikh himself prompted them. To understand this, remember it was a question of islah, that is why they were made to stand in the sun. In actual fact, there could be no greater degree of mercy in anybody else. He asked again, Do you wish to say anything? This time the two responded, We have erred. We ask to be forgiven. It will never happen again in future.

The punishment meted out was with an eye on the underlying cause of the error. The sheikh perceived that if this was their attitude with regard to the milk

belonging to him, it must not happen that they start behaving in the same manner with items belonging to others, that they utilise others items without permission, that they even start laying their hands on items belonging to their friends!

32.ISHRAFE NAFS - A MASALAH OF SULOOK

At times when an item is obtained on the basis of ishrafe nafs, these personages consider this also to be haram. This ploy has become prevalent amongst friends nowadays. For example: Somebody goes up to his friend and asks, Where did you buy this pen? It is lovely, ma-sha-Allah! The poor person being addressed has a noble disposition. He is also a person of stature in the community. He realises that this person fancies the pen and wishes to buy one. He, therefore, tells him, Dont be concerned. I do have another pen as well. Here, you take this one. This person takes the pen.

Taking this pen is na-jaez (prohibited in shariat). Taking the pen on this basis is termed ishrafe nafs.

A qissah:

A talibe-ilm (student of Deen) was studying by a buzurg alim. One day, as he arrived for his studies, he noticed some signs of hunger on his ustadhs face. The talibe-ilm sought permission to go out and said, Hadhrat, Ill be back shortly. He went home and brought back some food on a tray, and presented the food to his ustadh. Huzoor! Kindly partake of the food. The ustadh replied, Yes, I am hungry, but the moment you departed the thought came to me that you will bring me some food. This is ishrafe-nafs. This is why I cannot eat it. Not saying anything, the

talibe-ilm took the tray and went away. In a short while he was back with the tray. Huzoor! I am certain there is no longer any ishrafe-nafs, so please partake of the food now. The ustadh replied, Yes, the ishrafe-nafs is no longer present: there is no such yearning and anticipation left. He was hungry, and ate the food.

These are the islahi masael of sulook - sulook which is a portion of the shariat, an altaf portion - supremely exquisite, highly elegant, beautiful and delicate! Hadhratwala (R.A.) used to say, People have despoiled sulook. Sulook is an extremely exquisite field. How exquisite and delicate? As exquisite and delicate as constitutes the rooh (soul). And whose rooh? As is the rooh of the malaekah! Such a thing has been despoiled!

To continue: For the underlying reason that the two khadims had behaved in this manner towards their sheikh, and that tomorrow they will behave similarly with their friends, the sheikh had meted out the punishment. They were made to stand for some time in the heat of the summer sun. When their punishment was over, the sheikh said, There is in the community a person who cups blood. Call him. (In previous times, cupping, the cutting of a vein and letting out some blood, was a form of medical treatment.) The khadims went to call him. When he arrived the sheikh said, pointing to the area where the ground was damp with the perspiration of the two khadims, Kindly estimate the volume of liquid that would cause that dampness. Ma-sha-Allah, you are a man of experience. Gauge for me the quantity of liquid that would result in that much dampness. This person scrutinised the area, pondered for a moment, and then said, Huzoor, this wetness is caused by two to three tolas of water. The sheikh said, This is not water. This dampness is the

perspiration of these two friends of mine! It is my wish that you cup that much of my blood, and shed it where their perspiration has dripped!

Ponder a moment! The sheikh wishes to shed his blood where the sweat of his khadims had dripped! Upon hearing this the two khadims immediately stood pleading with the sheikh, Huzoor! What you did was for our islah. Do not do this to yourself! The sheikh said, It will be so. Where you have shed your perspiration, I shall shed my blood!

33.QUALITY OF A SHEIKH

This is peeri-mureedi! This quality of peer, by the fadhl of Allah Taala, still exists today! He has not become extinct. In previous ages there were more such personages, nowadays not so many. If the peer is not such, then he is not worthy of being a peer. That is, he is not worthy of becoming a sheikh. To be a mere peer is one thing; to be a sheikh is another. This sulook is a specialty - a science and an art. Sulook is not the name given to mere reading about tasawwuf. It is not a question of having merely pulled through a chillah (forty-day period). This is a completely different thing. What you are listening to is something completely diferent.

Ponder a moment. The sheikh paid no heed to his khadims. He had his blood cupped and had it shed where the perspiration of the two had dripped. This he did despite the pleadings of the two.

Now you should have some idea that this is that muttaqi that will be of assistance to you in this world, as well as the hereafter. Your worldly friend will tell you,

Brother! What are you saying? Where you shed your perspiration, I will shed my blood! But when the occasion arrives, he will run away!

There are children sitting in front of me. They are busy making friends. For their benefit let me mention a qissah related to us by Hadhratwala (R.A.). What can I say about what he had related to us? Boys! Listen! Take note of what type of friendship you should have and with whom. Also take note that to be a talibe-ilm and to make friends and acquaintances is contrary to being a talibe-ilm. Talibe-ilm and friendship? These two cannot co-exist. Ikhtilat (associating with others) is an extremely evil thing. It is poison for tulaba! Nay! Worse than poison!

The qissah:
One youngster started coming home very late. Several days passed in this manner. One day the father asked, Son, you come home late every night. Where do you go? The son replied, Abbajan, I have a friend. I visit him
every night. We sit and talk. That is why it gets so late. The father said, Really? Does one still find friends in this age? I was under the impression that friends existed in previous times. What use is a friend these days? Are there really such friends in this age? The son replied, Yes, Abba! He is such a friend, one who says that he will shed his blood where my perspiration drips! The father said, Very well. Tomorrow, when you go visit him, take me with. The following evening the father deliberately delayed setting off, with the result that it was past the normal time of his visit when they reached the friends house. The front door was locked. The son knocked, and also called out to his friend. After having called out several times, the friend, from inside the house, asked, Who is it? The son replied, It is I, your friend,

mentioning his name. The friend said, Oho! You have come rather late. He came and opened the door. Before the son could say a word, this friend of his, the one who had said that he was prepared to shed his blood where the sons perspiration drips, quickly spoke, I slept rather late. Im still feeling very drowsy. At this moment my tabiyet does not feel at all right. I ask to be forgiven. So saying, he closed the door and latched the chain again, and went back inside. The father spoke, You had said that he is your friend. How has he turned out to be? Come. Let me show you. I have a friend living nearby. I have gone old, and so has he. I have not visited him for several years. Come. Let us go to him. Then you can judge for yourself.

So saying, they set off again. When they reached the fathers friends house, the father called out to his friend. Immediately the friend replied from inside, Hang on. Im coming! Its many years since you have visited me!

Kindly note that the sons friend did not recognise the voice of his nightly visitor, but the fathers friend immediately recognised who it was, even after a lapse of several years!

After a short delay the door opened, but what a spectacle the friend presented! On his head was a dish, in his one hand he held a bag, and in the other hand a staff (lathi). After salam and formalities were over, the father asked his friend, pointing to the items he was carrying What is all this? The friend replied, I thought to myself, My friend has come, after such a long time, at such an odd hour! He must be in some difficulty! It is possible that he is impoverished and hungry. So this

dish contains some food. I shall feed him from this. Or, it may be possible that somebody he owes money to, has made life difficult for him.

So, this bag contains some money to give to him. Or, it may be possible that some enemy is after him, and a fight is imminent. So, this lathi will serve some use. Dear friend! Im somewhat old, but Ill still be able to dish out a shot or two! The father reassured him, There is no fight, there is no debt, and I am not famished. This here is my son. He has found himself a friend. I have seen this friend of his. So, now I have brought him to see my friend.

Another qissah

A friend is a rare species. Where is there a real friend today? Hadhratwala (R.A.) mentioned a qissah in this connection: A buzurg arrived at the house of his buzurg-friend. He knocked on the door. His friend answered the knock and, after salams were exchanged, asked, What can I do for you? The buzurg replied, I am in need of five hundred rupees. The friend went inside the house, took out five hundred rupees, and came to give it to the buzurg, who took the money and left. There was no cross questioning. This buzurg friend then came back into the house, went to sit on the charpai (bed), and started weeping.

All of you know that a wifes relationship is very informal and blunt. She will blurt out whatever she wants, whenever she wants, and in whatever way she wants to! So, when this buzurg husband started weeping the wife commented, Subhanallah! Just now, in a fit of passion, you readily took out five hundred rupees and gave it away. Now it seems you are grieving as to why you gave away the money! If that

is the case, why did you give away the money in the first place? The buzurg replied composedly, Begum! This is not the case. Then why are you weeping? she countered. He replied, I am weeping for the following reason: Tomorrow, on the day of Qiyamat, if Allah Taala were to ask, Why was it necessary for your friend to come to your house for assistance? Why did you not make yourself aware of his need beforehand? what answer will I give? That is what makes me weep!

Ponder a while! This is the friendship of the ahlullah! These personages are of use in this world, and they will be of use in the hereafter as well.

34.DECEITFUL FRIENDS

But you do not do the same! On my say-so dont go and take out five hundred rupees and give it away! As I have said before: The friend of today is not this type of friend who could be termed a friend. In fact, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has actually asked to be protected from the type of friend one comes across today. He has said,

'0 Allah! I seek protection from such a trickster friend - I am seeking protection from such a deceitful friend - that he stares at me so fixedly with both his eyes, and it appears that he stares at me with eyes of tremendous love, but in his heart he is tearing me apart and devouring me! I am seeking protection from such a cunning, conniving friend!

How does one know that he is such a deceitful person? Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) added, Whenever he sees anything good in me, he buries it! Whenever he sees anything favourable, anything good, any perfection in me, he

buries it! He does not bring it to his lips, never mind tell anybody about it. However, whenever he sees anything bad in me, he goes around telling others about it, he publicises it. He discloses my faults to others! 0 Allah! I seek protection from such a friend."

In these times one will find friends more of this type, illa ma-sha-Allah (with a few exceptions). That is why I have to emphasise this point, that you dont also take out five hundred rupees and start dishing it around!

We had touched on this subject when discussing the ayet.

Haq Taala is saying that this worldly friend is not going to be of any service to you. Here there is mere lip service, and over there there will be enmity between one and the other. Yes, those who are muttaqi will be of service here and over there in the akhirat as well.

Another qissah.

Another qissah comes to mind, related to us by Hadhratwala (R.A.). I merely mimic Hadhratwala (R.A.) - merely repeat what he narrated to us. He narrated:
A certain buzurg became ill. The illness grew worse. He realised that he would shortly pass away. It so happened that in that locality there lived a kafan-chor -a thief who would dig up the grave of a recently buried person and steal the shroud wrapped around the corpse, and then sell it! The buzurg gave the order that the kafan-char be summoned. When the kafan-chor pitched up, the buzurg said to him, Bhai, it seems that my death is imminent. And I also know that it is your habit to steal the shroud from corpses. It must not happen that you come to steal my shroud

and leave me lying there naked! Hearing this, the kafan-chor became petrified, and hastily said, Hadhrat! Your shroud? Taubah! Taubah! Can it ever happen? The buzurg said, Bhai, once habits have set in they are difficult to remove. How can I be convinced that you will not do that to me? The kafan-chor replied, Huzoor, you tell me what will convince you. The buzurg asked, For how much do you sell the shrouds? The kafan-chor replied, For ten rupees. The buzurg ordered his khadim, Give him twenty rupees. The money was handed over to the kafan-chor who gladly accepted the sum. The buzurg then said, Bhai, now you will not steal my shroud? The kafan-chor replied, Hadhrat, even before this I gave my word. Now even more so, because I have received twice the amount of money! The buzurg did not recover from his illness. He passed away and was buried. Night fell and the kafan-chor pitched up at the kabr. Remember very well, that when a bad habit has become ingrained, it cannot be discarded until complete rectification (islahe kamil) has not taken place. The kafan-char dug up the grave and uncovered the shrouded body. He extended his hand to remove the shroud... Suddenly, the hand of the buzurg moved swiftly, catching hold of the hand of the kafan-chor. This was the karamat (miracle) of the buzurg. However, the shock was too great for the kafan-chor, and he died on the spot.

Another qissah.

The mention of this karamat reminds me of another qissah of another karamat. There was one mullajee, the poor soul was a buzurg person, having a beard gone quite white. Allah Taala values a white beard considerably. Huzoor (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) states,

Zate Bari Taala feels bashful for a Muslim who has a white beard.

This buzurg used to buy his oil form a certain oil-seller (teli). Every time the buzurg came to him the oil-seller would remark, Mianjee! Is your swinging beard better, or is the swinging bell around the neck of my bullock better? This is the manner in which the oil-seller used to tease and joke with the mullajee.

Nowadays it has become our habit not to keep a beard, which is an act of fisq (sinning openly). In other words that person not keeping a beard is a fasiq. However, to mock about a beard, to be derisive about it, is an act of kufr! For example, to say, What is this you have kept as a sign-board? or to remark, Goats keep beards!

I advise my friends not to feel upset, but to be thankful to the person. When somebody says that goats have beards, this person is actually bearing witness to your masculinity! You will find a male-goat has a beard, and that a female-goat has no beard! Also, you will find that respectable shops will have sign-boards, but places of ill-repute not necessarily so! So, what he is implying is, You are kamil deendar, and I am not kamil deendar!

To continue: The oil-seller used to mock at the mullajee by comparing his beard to the bell around the neck of his bullock. Everytime the mullajee went to the oil-seller, he was invariably mocked in this manner. However -Allahu-akbar! - those who are Allahwala, have a tremendous degree of tolerance and quality of accommodation. He did not stop buying his oil from his shop, and he thought to himself that the poor fellow is making these comments out of affection.

The mullajee became critically ill. Death was imminent. He instructed his close ones, Upon my passing away, carry my janazah past the house of the oil-seller. Acting on these instructions, when he passed away, his janazah was carried past the house of the oil-seller. The oil-seller was sitting at the entrance of his house at the time. As the janazah came in line with him the mullajee moved aside the shroud and sat up!

It comes in the Hadith shareef that the karamat of the auliya-Allah are haq in their lifetime, and haq even after their passing away.

The mullajee then addressed the oil-seller, 0 Mian-Teli! Today I can state that my waving beard is better than the bell hanging on your bullock!

The question arises: Why did not the mullajee make this statement in his lifetime? He had heard the taunts repeatedly. After all, what type of heart is it that would not be affected at some time or other by such taunts? Think for yourself: were not the remarks of the oil-seller such as to provoke anger? Definitely so! However, the buzurg must have straightened somebodys shoes. That is, he must have had his tarbiyet made, and, as I have mentioned previously, even if you were to drop excreta on somebody who has had his tarbiyet made, that person will not show any ghussah (anger)! In this age people become bayt on the premise of having their islah made. However, the term islah is taken, but no work is done, illa ma-sha-Allah (with some exceptions).

The mullajee, having said what he needed to, lied down, and the janazah proceeded. The question arises: Why did he not make this statement while still alive? Why wait for this moment to make the assertion he did?

The reason is that he did not know whether his death would be with iman or not! So, how could he make an assertion? The following went through his mind, Allah forbid! Allah forbid! But if my death is not with iman, then the waving of the bullocks bell will be better than my beard! There is no punishment, no censure, no reproof for a bullock in the hereafter, but if my end is not with iman then I do not know what will be in store for me on the plains of Qiyamat!

This is termed khashyat - true fear of Allah Taala.

What happened to the kafan-chor? There was a mureed of the buzurg living nearby. The buzurg appeared in his dream and related to him how the kafan-chor had not kept his promise, and had come and dug up the grave and how he was about to snatch the kafan whe he caught his hand. However, the shock was too much for the kafan-chor, and he died. At the moment the kafan-chor was lying dead in the qabr. The mureed should please come and remove him and bury him. The mureed was very perturbed, and, in the dream asked the buzurg, Hadhrat! What will happen to the kafan-chor now? The buzurg replied, Seeing his hand is in mine, I will intercede for him on the Day of Qiyamat!

Yes, those who are muttaqi will be of service here and over there in the akhirat as well.

All this came up when we were discussing whom we should meet and whom we should not. Right in the beginning we had stated that nisbat is a very important thing.

35.CONCLUSION

The time of Maghreb is close. In conclusion, dear brothers, let me re-iterate: This Majlis - Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen - has nisbat with Hadhrat Hakeemul Ummat Maulana Thanvi (R.A.). And whosoever is even slightly connected to Hadhrat Thanvi (R.A.), he will definitely be connected to the Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen. Should such a person not have a connection with this Majlis, and with related affairs, then this is beyond understanding.

We make dua that Allah Taala blesses us, with ikhlas and istiqamat, with the taufeeq to perform the work of deen, and cause the Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen to progress.

36.A LETTER

(Hereunder follows a translation of a letter written by Hadhratjee (R.A.) on the topic of nisbat maAllah. The letter appears in a booklet called Maktoobat Thalathah, printed by the Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen - Pakistan.)
That you worship Allah as if you see Him; and if you are unable to see Him (know well) that He sees you!

My siddeeq sadeq friend and mukhlis bandah,

Dear friend, to attain nisbat is fardh. And to attain the know-how (knowledge) of the methodology of attaining what is fardh, is also fardh. Therefore, it is necessary

that one comes to know the reality of what nisbat is, and what the methodology is of attaining nisbat. For this reason, whatever has reached me from my peer and murshid, Ala-hadhrat, Hakeemul Ummat, nawwarallahu marqadahu, I present to you.

THE REALITY OF NISBAT

The meaning of nisbat is taalluq and lagao (connection and attachment). By this is meant the special connection that the bandah (servant/ bondman) has with Allah Taala. This taalluq is one based on qabool (acceptance by Allah Taala) and radha (the pleasure of Allah Taala), as one would see between an obedient and submissive lover and a faithful and loyal beloved. Thus, it is apparent that a fasiq and a kafir cannot become sahebe-nisbat (one who has attained nisbat).

SIGNS OF NISBAT

The signs of nisbat are these that when one is in the company of a sahebe-nisbat the effect is that of a forceful attraction towards the akhirat (hereafter) and a distaste and repulsion for dunya; and deendar people incline more towards this person relative to worldly people.

FRUITS (EFFECTS) OF NISBAT-MAALLAH

The persons taalluq is basically and intrinsically only with Allah Taala; and intrinsically with nothing else. When the taalluq is not with anything except Allah Taala, then, when any item is lost, then there will also be no special anxiety or disquietude.

PRE-CONDITION FOR ATTAINMENT OF NISBAT

A pre-condition is to have kamil radha-e-Haq - the complete pleasure of Allah Taala. Isolated or independent occasions of radha are not sufficient. Independent episodes of radha are accrued on every good act: If a mumin is involved in a sinful act and thereafter is involved in some act of obedience -namaz, etc., - then he will be inviting displeasure because of the sin he committed, but he will also gain radha because of the namaz, etc., the acts of obedience and ibadat. In the same way in evil acts and in good acts he will attain displeasure and radha respectively, each on its appropriate occasion (which are signs of the phase of nafse lowwamah), but this type of situation does not entitle the person to be a recipient of nisbat. However, the pre-condition for attaining nisbat is radha-e-tarn - continuous and complete pleasure (of Allah Taala).

THE EXAMPLE OF INCOMPLETE RADHA

The example of radha na-tarn (incomplete pleasure of Allah Taala) is like that of an ill person who experiences a temporary reduction and alleviation of his illness. This is a blessing for him, but one would not say that he has attained complete good health. In the same way, the combination of the occasional acts of obedience with acts of sinning cannot be termed nisbat maAllah. Therefore, in order to be an aspirant and applicant for the attainment of nisbat, the specific procedure that will bring about radha-e-tarn, which is a pre-condition for attaining nisbat, will have to be followed. !

DETAILS OF THIS PROCEDURE FOR ATTAINING NISBAT knowledge of Deen (ilme Deen) has to be acquired to the degree of necessity. Then, firstly, to

perform two rakats of taubah namaz.

Then undertake the islah (rectification) of ones zahiri amal and ones batini a'mal, with forceful coercion of ones nafs. Give special attention to the islah of the batini character, which is of extreme importance and which is more difficult.

One should vigilantly and assiduously be constant and punctual (with this programme) for a sufficiently long period, until a stage is reached when these amale zahirah and batinah become a hal - become part of ones disposition -that one performs these amals with ease. When these have become embedded and established firmly, it is termed as having reached a maqam.

All the azkar (pl. of zikr), ashgal (pl. of shagl), muraqabat, mujahadat and riyadhat that are prescribed are to achieve this stage of ease. But the basic objective is the islah of the amale zahirah and batinah. It is on this islah that nisbate haqeeqi is dependent.

When the mumin bandah is constant and punctual with his amale zahirah and batinah then Haq Taala has a continual and permanent taalluq of radha with him. That is it! This is the reality of nisbat maAllah!

Azeeze-min - my dear friend! Mere constancy and punctuality with zikr, or constant awareness (hudhoor), or remembrance (yad dasht) by a process of training and exercising, without islah amale zahirah and batinah, is not the reality of nisbat. However, the above, together with constancy in the islah of the amale zahirah and batinah, are very helpful and supportive in attaining nisbat. The reason is, azeeze-

min, that whoever has the thought of Haq Taala within him all the time, for him to be disobedient to Allah Taala is very unlikely.

IN ESSENCE

Thus, the reality of nisbat is this that Haq Taala develops a special taalluq of radha with the bandah, and this is dependent on the islah of amale salehah, both zahirah and batinah.

THE DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF NISBAT

The distinctive feature of nisbat is a special injizab (absorbtion), which has, as its necessary consequence, by the fadhl of Allah Taala, ease in obedience (tat) and worship (ibadat), constancy with zikr and constant awareness (hudhoor).

BAQA (PERMANENCE) OF NISBAT

Azeeze-min - my dear friend! This is that nisbat maAllah which, in the normal course of events, does not ever decline or fade away, just as that situation that when a person becomes baleg (pubertal), he does not revert to pre-puberty. This is that stage which the sufiya-karam have expressed as fana.

On one who has attained the stage of fana does not ever become a reprobate.

INCIDENTAL LAPSE INTO SIN

My sadiq friend! Do not let the following suspicion enter your mind: Even after attainment and establishment of nisbat some Sahaba (R.A.) and auliya-Allah have been involved in sin, so how can they be still deserving of radha-e-ilahi, and how can nisbat maAllah still exist?

Azeeze-min! Such occasional or incidental lapses are neither contrary to permanence of radha, nor do they cancel nisbat maAllah. Understand very well, that even after having developed a very intense and profound friendship, there may still occasionally arise tiffs and temporary estrangements between friends. However, after reconciliation the same deep and profound friendship is re-established. In actual fact, even during the period of estrangement and displeasure, that same friendship still exists in its customary position, and it does not decline. The estrangement and displeasure were merely temporary.

Understand the above very well, and embed it in your heart.

AN ILLUSTRATION

Understand it as follows: When an ill person has attained complete good health, it does not necessarily follow that he will never develop a cold even. If it happens that he occasionally lapses into a dietary indiscretion, will he not suffer some harm? Definitely he will! However, this will only be temporary. After correcting himself, and compensating for the indiscretion, that same condition of good health will return.

Another example: Understand that an alim, after he has qualified, despite the fact, that he had achieved distinctions in his studies, and had developed great scholarly capabilities, will he never get stuck at any particular point? Obviously, occasionally he may falter somewhere, but by directing his attention to the problem, he will remove it.

Understand this very well.

It follows that a wasile-bihaq sahebe-nisbat, if he lapses incidentally into some sin, that this is neither contrary to permanent radha, nor does it cancel nisbat maAllah.

May Allah Taala bless my respected friend with permanent radha and real nisbat.

Was Salaam

Chapter No.:

11

1.FOREWORD

Allhamdu-lillah, Through the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of our sheikh, this eleventh booklet in the series "For Friends" is ready.

Having this issue of "For Friends Number Eleven" in one's hands, it is a most appropriate time to re-assess one's priorities and perspectives. Looking back, from the time Booklet Number One was read, have one's objectives been achieved? Has there been any progress? At least, has there been some benefit? In order to make it easy to answer these questions, some of the objectives for compiling this series need to be listed:

FIRSTLY: If one has created a ta'alluq (a connection) with a sheikh-e-kamil and one is now following a programme of islah then one has progressed to the desired

extent.

SECONDLY: If the above has not been achieved, but by reading these booklets one has made significant changes to one's life, then too one has benefited, but not necessarily to the maximum.

THIRDLY: Even if there have been no changes made to one's worldly or Dini life, yet one now knows what is Haq and what is batil then too one has benefited. Insha-Allah, One's iman will remain intact by adhering to what is Haq.

FOURTHLY: One is reading merely for the pleasure of the qissas related - ("I really enjoyed the qissas Hadhratji related!") - then too this is not without benefit. Hadhratji (r.a.) said that at the appropriate time these qissas, or anything that has been read, Insha-Allah, will come to the fore and will be of use.

However, the question to be answered is: Has one benefited to the MAXIMUM? If all four objectives have been realised then the answer will be yes. If not, then it is necessary to re-assess one's intentions, and re-exert oneself in the right direction.

At this point it is important to be aware of the traps laid by Shaitan: Our Hadhrat (r.a.) pointed out that many people will remark: "Where are there any masha'ikh like Junaid, Shibli and the rest?" They therefore do not turn to the present-day masha'ikh for their islah. Pointing out the fallacy of this argument our Hadhrat (r.a.) said that an ill person wanting a cure for his illness will turn to the physicians available at the time, and he will not endure the suffering brought on by his illness, wistfully longing for the great physicians of previous times. In fact one sees how, at the scene of an accident, the injured are only too glad to get help from others, whether the persons are qualified doctors or whether they just have some first aid

experience only! The salek should do the same and turn to those who are qualified in the field of islah, of whom there a number of individuals present at any given time. Of course, one has to search for the right sheikh-e- kamil.

A second strategy of Shaitan is to put the waswasah into a person's mind that he is a hypocrite. "Don't expect me to be like that - I don't want to appear pious when I know I am not. I don't want to be a hypocrite!" This is an argument one hears repeated time and again. This person is actually stating that he does not want to be a proper Muslim, because then he would be a hypocrite! He does not want to be spiritually sound and healthy because then he would be a hypocrite! Can one imagine a sick person telling the doctor, "Doctor, I know that you have promised that I will be cured of my illnesses if I take the necessary treatment, but I know I am an ill person, so do not expect me to take the treatment and become healthy, because then I would be a hypocrite!"? The ludicrousness of this statement is self-evident.

The booklets previously published in this series contain enough material for the sincere salek to reach his destination. Also, Allhamdu-lillah, there is sufficient Dini literature available in English on a variety of topics. The aim of carrying on with this series is not merely to add another booklet to the list of literature available, but the aim is to stimulate and motivate the sincere salek to greater effort in his striving to attain qurb-e-Ilahi and nisbat-ma'Allah. Those already treading the path will also benefit.

May Allah Ta'ala grant these blessings of qurb-e-Ilahi and nisbat-ma'Allah to this humble servant, as well as to all the readers. Ameen.

Dr. Ismaiel Mangera.

[The majlis that has been translated in this number was held in Jalalabad, India, by Hadhrat Maulana Masihullah Khan sahib (r.a.) on the 15th Jamadi-ul-akhir 1409, corresponding to the 24th January 1989.]

DIL-JO'I - MAKING HEARTS HAPPY

It has been stated in the Hadith sharif that Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) has said:

As far as Allah Ta'ala is concerned, after the performance of fara'idh (compulsory acts), the best loved act is that which makes a Muslim brother happy (provided that he himself suffers no harm) - Hadith sharif: Targib.

2.AN IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE

At times, provided that there is no worldly or Dini harm, to perform a certain task that will bring joy, bring cheer to another, bring pleasure to the person and make him happy as an act of kindness, is also an usul, a principle. This is also one type of order amongst other orders as far as the ahlullah are concerned. And whosoever does so is from the ahlullah!

3.AN INCIDENT CONCERNING HAJI SAHIB

Hadhratwala (Hadhrat Thanwi(R.A.)) related the following incident to us in his majlis:

Some folk from Ranpur and surrounding areas went to perform Haj. Whilst there

they went to visit and meet Hajisahib, (i.e. Haji Imdadullah sahib(R.A.) as Hajisahib was also (originally) from Ranpur.

When one is in a foreign country and one meets somebody from one's own country, and this person is also from one's hometown, and, on top of that, it is some relative and, moreover, a very close relative - for example, without prior notification one's son or brother pitches up - and one meets him, then how great will not one's happiness be! How much will one not enquire about his health and welfare, about the well-being of relatives, of acquaintances and of the people in the neighbourhood! This is part of a human being's natural disposition of empathy.

So, these people from Ranpur arrived at Hajisahib's (r.a.) place and met him. They made salam, musafahah (i.e. shook hands), and got involved in inquiring about one another's health, the health of friends, the conditions prevailing back home, and in this way the conversation carried on and on. When about to take leave, these people commented to Hajisahib (r.a.) concerning their visiting him, "Hadhrat, we have wasted so much of your time! You could have been making 'Allah! Allah!' - making the zikr of Allah Ta'ala, making ibadat and you could have kept yourself occupied and busy with your shagl. That is your normal practice. By our coming here, we have obstructed you!" This is the normal habit of asking for forgiveness at the end.

4.A SUPERFLUOUS CUSTOM

It has become a baseless custom for some people to apologise in this way, and it sometimes happens that inappropriate remarks are made without there being any

necessity for it. In the same way some write in their letters to me or in their islahi notebooks, "If I have written anything contrary to proper etiquette please forgive me." My reply to this is, "This statement is superfluous. My heart is clean." Before writing (or speaking) one should take care to have full control over one's pen (or one's tongue), and when one writes with vigilance (or when one speaks having pondered first and understood properly) then why should the necessity arise for apologising?

5.A MISCONCEPTION

To carry on: When these folk apologised, our Dadapir, Haji Imdadullah sahib (r.a.) replied, "Is that so? To keep oneself occupied with zikr, this is ibadat? And to sit with one's friends and to converse with them in order to bring happiness to their hearts, is this not ibadat?" (This our Hadhratwala (R.A.) related to us.) "Is it correct that to be engaged in zikrullah ," - what people commonly recognise as zikrullah - "that only is ibadat? And to sit with one's friends to bring cheer to their hearts and to make them happy by talking to them, is this also not ibadat?"

Just see - in his era - exactly who was Haji Imdadullah sahib (r.a.)? Ask the giants, those August personages recognised as "Qutbul Irshad" - Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi sahib; "Hujjatul-Islam" - Hadhrat Maulana Qasim Nanotwi sahib and "Hakimul-Ummat Mujaddidul-Ummat" - Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali (R.A.). Ask these giants who was Hajisahib (r.a.) and what his qualities were!

6.SUNNAT-E-RASUL(SALLALLAHU ALAIYHI WASSALLAM)

Do you understand? This method is in accordance with the sunnat of Nabi-e-

Karim (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). We belong to his ummat, so it is him that we refer to. So much so that there is a narration of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam):

Conduct yourself with people according to their character and habits. - Hadith Tasharruf

The teaching in this statement is that in one's permissible social conduct one should take into consideration the temperaments of one's friends, so that the one should not feel anxious or be in dread of the other.

The following is narrated in the Hadith sharif: In Rasیlullah's (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) majlis, tales of olden times were also related. The Sahaba Kiram (R.A.) used to relate their experiences of the days of Ignorance (Jahalat) and Huzur (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) used to listen silently. Once a Sahabi(R.A.) was relating some episode from the days of Jahalat. It so happened that the majlis sharif ended before he could finish his tale. The next day, on the occasion of the majlis, that same Sahabi r.a. was also present and Huzur (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) remarked, "That incident that you were relating was left incomplete. What happened subsequently?"

It may be that my voice is not reaching you. Are you able to hear me, brothers? [A loud "Yes!" was the response from those present. Hadhratji (r.a.) then continued:] I am merely trying to point out to you what the comprehensive qualities of the Allahwala are. If some foolish and ignorant persons were to hear such talks taking place at a buzurg's place then they will remark, "We have come to listen to some other topics. The talks here are about agriculture, about the price of goods, about

kilos of wheat, 'Brother, what is the price of wheat these days?'" They then get up and walk away. One does not know what concepts they had before coming to the buzurg, and with what muhabbat (love and affection) and aqidat (faith and confidence) they had come.

7.TESTING THE SALEK

Oho! Their examination has been taken! It is for this reason that suddenly such topics will come to the fore, and such persons are automatically tested, to see how firm is their aqidat (faith and confidence). They came professing tremendous muhabbat and tremendous aqidat. But they walk out commenting, "We have come to listen to other topics. The talks here are about agriculture and business!"

8.SUNNAT-E-ILAHI

Let us progress further. (This is for those who have correct aqidat and correct i'tiqad and i'timad with regard to their sheikh!) We can state that this type of discussions are also Sunnate-Ilahi - the practice of Allah Ta'ala. Just see: are there not references made to commerce in the Qur'an Sharif? And see also, are there not references made to agriculture in the Qur'an Sharif? Is there not mention of trades and skills?

It was not their hands that made this.... S.36. A.35.

One will find mention made of animals:

......And have subdued them [i.e. animals] unto them... S.36.A.72.

These ayat appear in the Qur'an Sharif.

Mention is also made of incidents of previous ages and the people of previous ages: mention of Fir'oun; mention of Qarun; mention of the tribes of Thamud and of ad; mention of the Companions of the Elephants (Ashab-e-fil). After all, these are commentaries of the Age of Jahalat! And then, finally, Allah Ta'ala states by way of a lesson for us to take heed, "Just see what type of people were these! I have described the Age of Jahalat, I have narrated to you the conditions of the people of previous times, and I have mentioned the manner in which I dealt with them, but see how rock-hard their hearts were, how stony-hearted they became, how they became filled with animosity. Seeing their situation those without iman should have been filled with fear, taken heed and accepted iman; and those with iman should have paid even greater attention to the safeguarding and progress of their iman."

9.INCREASE IN IMAN & REMOVAL OF NEGLIGENCE

The iman of the mu'minin and mukhlisin increased: they had developed fear of Allah Ta'ala. Their hearts were now kindled. They had come to recognise what the system, the habit, the sunnat of Allah Ta'ala was. This we saw with the iman of the mu'minin and sincere Sahaba(R.A.), that with an increase in their fear their iman increased, that they become an embodiment of the ayet:

....that they might add faith unto their faith. (S.48. A.4.)

In the same way the conditions of the ambiya (A.S.) and of the pious, and kamil obedient mu'min people of previous times have also been mentioned, as well as the munificent way they were accommodated by Haq Ta'ala by being showered abundantly with blessings upon blessings, bounties upon bounties, so that those

who are mu'minin may feel happy and the iman of the mu'minin may increase. The result is, as Allah Ta'ala Himself has stated in the ayet quoted above, that the iman that they had, now increased. Therefore, those whose temperaments are congenial, whose understanding is of a noble quality, they will ponder on His blessings and His mercy, they will perceive something more and they will progress further with honour and dignity; and they will avoid anything which is of a corruptive nature. As for those whose temperaments are ignoble, whose hearts are not evil but whose hearts are hard, when they hear of what happened to past nations and how Zate Bari Ta'ala challenged them and punished them, the hardness of their hearts will melt and their hearts will become soft. Each one ponders, "Is this the system that Haq Ta'ala follows? Is this His methodology? How long can I persist with my evil ways? How long can I continue with my waywardness? It should not happen that I am suddenly apprehended!"

Lo! the punishment of thy Lord is stern. (S.85. A.12.)

In this way their hard-heartedness changes into softness.

To continue: Zate Bari Ta'ala has related qissas from the days of Jahalat and of previous nations, and the manner in which He dealt with the two groups mentioned above so that the Ummat of His Mehbub (i.e. the Muslim Ummat of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) may learn lessons from these incidents. Those mu'minin Muslims who have lapsed into negligence may remove their negligence thereby; and those who have an awareness and concern of the hereafter and have already entered the phase of obedience, that their obedience may increase even more thereby. Also, these incidents have not been mentioned just once in the

Qur'an Sharif, but they have been mentioned several times, in varying tones and in different chapters.

Do you understand?

To continue: Various topics were discussed in the majlis of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). However, those filled with animosity would try to corrupt the plain and simple Musalman Sahaba (R.A.).Once they were outside they used to say, "We do not know what was being said. We fail to understand what he said, and why he said it." These people were, in all appearances, considered to be among the important people of the precincts of Makkah. They were the so-called intellectuals and intelligentsia. They would argue, "If the talk had any sense in it, if it warranted being understood, then - seeing people of our calibre of intelligence could not understand it - what are the chances that these simple-minded poor folk sitting there would understand?" This was the stratagem used to mislead others. This was the ploy to seduce the simple and straight-forward folk. All this is also mentioned in the Qur'an Sharif.

However, these very simple and straight-forward folk, after they had stayed with obedience in the service of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) finally turned out to be people with great minds! Their understanding and insight became so deep, their temperaments became so highly attuned and tranquil that all those who had considered themselves to be great intellectuals, far above others, all came to be proven to be complete and utter fools.

This discourse is meant for those mu'minin, sincere seekers, who desire an increase in their iman and progress in their batin and their obedience, with an accompaniment of concern for the akhirat within themselves. These incidents are meant for them, that they will heed the lessons contained in them and discard their previous ways and, having knowingly chosen this route, henceforth adopt good ways and choose these new ways in a firm and well-grounded manner. It is stated in the Qur'an Sharif:

Say: This is my Way: I call on Allah with sure knowledge, (on evidence clear as the seeing with one's eyes), I and whosoever followeth me. Glory be to Allah! (S.12 A.108.)

10.BASHASHAT OF IMAN

This results in the bashashat (joy/ exhilaration) of iman coming into their hearts, and when the bashashat of iman enters the heart then iman continues to increase and there is no question of it decreasing. This was testified to by none other than the non-Muslim Christian king Heraclius

The incident referred to appears in Bukhari Sharif and, briefly, is as follows: At the time that the letter from Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) with the invitation for him to embrace Islam was received by Heraclius, Abu Sufyan and others were also in the same country. At this stage Abu Sufyan had as yet not accepted Islam and he and his group had come there merely to trade. Having received the letter from Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and knowing as well of the presence of the Makkans, Heraclius summoned Abu Sufyan and read out the letter. He then proceeded to find out more details about the Muslims.

Among several other questions put to Abu Sufyan, he was also asked as to those who entered into Islam, did they progress or did they retrogress? Bearing in mind that Abu Sufyan had not brought iman as yet, he replied that they progressed.1

So, Heraclius, despite being a Christian king, a non-Muslim, testified to this that it is the demand of the bashashat (joy/ exhilaration) of those with iman, that when bashashat enters iman then those with iman progress, and they do not retrogress. Heraclius himself was very well informed of his own Christian religion in order to have made this observation. This is exactly what Allah Ta'ala has stated in the Qur'an Sharif in the ayet quoted previously: In answer to the question, "What is the benefit of these a'mal (deeds), what are the effects?" it is stated that these are the bases for an increase and progress of their iman.

11.LAUGHING ALOUD

To continue: The Sahaba (R.A.) used to mention incidents from the days of Jahalat in the court of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). Whenever an episode was not completed Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) himself used to remind the narrator, "What was that incident? Just complete it." If there was any humour in the narrative, Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) used to smile as well. But he never laughed out loud. The Arabic word is "Qahqahu" - to laugh loudly; burst into laughter; roar with laughter. One should not laugh loudly. As far as possible one should stifle such laughter. And as for the ahle-ilm - the scholars of Din - to laugh loudly is contrary to their honour and dignity (shan). However, if one does laugh out loud incidentally, it is not mamnu' (forbidden). Similarly, if involuntarily it should happen, then also it is not forbidden. But to deliberately laugh loudly as is

practised among the common people, is completely contrary to the shan of tulaba (students of Din) and ulema. That Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) laughed out loudly (qahqahah) is not proven anywhere, but dhahak is proven. Dhahak means "to laugh." That is, to laugh just sufficiently loudly that those nearby hear it. This is dhahak. It is stated in "Sharah Tahzib":

It is the nature of man (that if there is any amazing humourous occurrence) he tends to laugh.

It has also been proven that Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had laughed in this manner (dhahak), although it was only twice. It was not his habit to laugh, but nevertheless it has been narrated that he did. Therefore, if any alim were to laugh it would not be contrary to the sunnat. These are Dini masa'il mentioned incidentally in-between.

12.RASULULLAH'S (SALLALLAHU ALAIYHI WASSALLAM) FEAR (KHAUF)

The reason was the fear that Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had. The du'a that Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) made was:

"O Allah! Make Your fear and dread dominant in me, greater than anything else!"

Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) is saying, "Grant me such fear, such tremendous fear of You, that nobody else in the whole world can experience." This is the result of ma'rifat- Ilahi - having gnosis of Allah Ta'ala. As one's ma'rifat-Ilahi increases - as one's knowledge of Allah Ta'ala increases - to that degree does the condition of the heart also becomes imbued with colours and becomes firm. I do not wish to comment further. Having made this statement I do not wish to state

anything further as to the manner of the heart being coloured with splendid hues and firmness.

However, it has been established that Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had tremendous khauf. The lesson to take is this, that Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) could bear that degree of fear. He could in no way transgress the limits. In no way could he move away from equilibrium. However, the Muslim Ummat could not bear such khauf. Therefore, the limits of fear were also set out, as appears in a du'a at another place:
"I seek that much of khauf of You that it is a barrier between myself and the commission of sins against You."

That is, " I desire that much khauf from You that it forms a barrier between me and sins committed against You, that I do not perform any act or any deed, anything whatsoever, contrary to Your orders."
Over there, the request was for "Akhwafal ashya" (extreme fear), and over here, the request is for fear within certain limits. Therefore, for the general mu'minin populace, that amount of fear is sufficient that they do not do anything contrary to the orders of Haq Ta'ala. That is enough.

13.TWO METHODS OF CORRECTION

So, Zate Bari Ta'ala has related two types of qissas in the Qur'an Sharif. Those whose hearts are of the one type will be affected to that degree, and they will abstain from sinning and they will draw towards obedience (ta'at). And those

whose hearts are of the other type and they are already in obedience, they will be those who will progress in their ta'at (obedience).

Some are such that their hearts will be seasoned and primed by mention of the showering of blessings and they will bend and submit towards obedience. Others' hearts are such that by the mention of punishment and wrath on wrongdoing their hearts will cause to soften and be drawn towards obedience. In essence, Zate Bari Ta'ala's purpose is to save one from contrary actions and persistence therein, and to draw and bind one to obedience.

Take this example: A father sees his child doing wrong. At times he puts fear into him; at times he uses harsh words; at times he threatens him; at times he relates to him incidents of how others came to suffer harm and injury, trying to get him to bring into focus some concern. What is the purpose of all this? The purpose is that he should save himself from evil; save himself from being corrupted; save himself from situations of harm and disgrace; save himself from injury; save himself from sitting in the company of undesirable persons.

On the other hand, take another child who is also doing wrong: the father speaks to him with softness, with affection, with love, that he should save himself from wrongdoing. This child's temperament is such that he will heed this approach. The father's purpose is the same in this case as well, that he should save himself from wrong; he should abstain from evil; he should avoid situations of shame and disgrace; that he should rather veer to avenues of good and of benefit and honour.

In both cases the purpose is the same, at times using stern expressions and harsh words; and at times using tones of affection and love.

In the same way Zate Bari Ta'ala sets forth in the Qur'an Sharif blessings of the highest order. In mentioning these ne'mats (blessings) He uses amazing tonalities in Surah Ar- Rahman:
Then which of the favours of your Lord will ye deny? (S.55. A.63.)
Then a very short ayet is narrated: Dark green with foliage. (S.55.A.64.)

Thereafter He asks again, as if to say, "Which of My ne'mats are you going to deny? Ponder a bit and see in what different ways I am trying to explain to you!" Just see in what amazingly loving tones these statements are set forth!

14.ALLAH TA'ALA'S LOVE & COMPASSION

At a different place Allah Ta'ala states:
Shall We utterly ignore you because ye are a wanton folk? (S.43 A.5)

As if to say, "Oh dear! You have debased yourself somewhat. So, shall We stop advising you?" Just see how lovingly it is put! That individual with a soft heart, one who has even the slightest spark of muhabbat for Zate Bari Ta'ala, should break down into tears on hearing this. Or should he not? How excellent is not Your mercy! How excellent is not Your affection! Wah! Wah! How much hope is He not instilling!

Just ponder what Haq Ta'ala is saying, "So, shall We stop advising you? How can that happen when, in actual fact, I have created you? Now then, just look at yourself, what have you turned yourself into? But, despite My admonitions why

are you not taking heed and why are you not turning towards good? No matter how much you have dropped below the boundaries should I stop giving you advice? That will not happen! From here onwards you look at yourself: To what degree do you have sensibility within yourself? You gauge for yourself. I am pulling you towards Me. I am giving you nasihat." ("Nasihat" implying "having your welfare at heart".)

Are you listening or not? Ponder on this!

Then again Allah Ta'ala has made an amazing statement, a very endearing statement, full of compassion. These are statements meant for those who have living hearts. We are all mu'min sitting here, and which mu'min is such that he does not possess a living heart? Yes, it is a different matter that there are differences between one heart and another, one being very soft and another not so soft. It can never be that a mu'min's heart is like stone, and it should also never be so!

At a different place Haq Ta'ala states:
What can Allah gain by your punishment if ye are grateful and ye believe? Nay, it is Allah that recogniseth (all good) and knoweth all things. (S.4. A.147.)

Have you pondered? This is a very enchanting statement - a very enrapturing statement; a statement to set the heart aflame; a touching statement to melt the heart! What an amazing tone has been used, O dear! What will Allah Ta'ala gain by punishing you? What an endearing statement! Are you listening;What will Allah Ta'ala gain by punishing you? It is such that it causes the heart to weep!

Tears may or may not gush from one's eyes, but the heart weeps! What will Allah Ta'ala gain by punishing you? What will it benefit Allah Ta'ala to cause you grief? What will He gain by beating you? How will He benefit by causing you injury or harm? What, will there be an increase in the Grandeur of Allah Ta'ala, as we see with important worldly people?

What happens with important worldly people is that somebody utters something that offends them. Arrogantly they command, "Bring the culprit here!" He is brought forth. "Beat him up! Bash him up! " So this Big Shot sahib's honour has risen! He has vanquished a poor weak man and made an impression - He is a man of great strength! He is a man of power! He is a man of influence! His esteem has gone up! In hushed tones people would whisper to one another, "Never mind this poor wretch, even the Thanedar (Chief Police Inspector) would be dealt with in this way." And mind you, it was no small feat for the Thanedar to be given a beating. That was in the old days. You are still children, too young to have seen those days.

However, Allah Ta'ala states, "What will I gain by punishing you, by causing droughts, by causing you takleef, by causing you sorrow? Will My honour and grandeur increase thereby? My honour and grandeur is as it was. There is no question of increase and decrease, of becoming more or getting less." Allah Ta'ala is not such that His qualities increase or decrease, that they rise and decline, that they ascend and descend in status, that His superiority can wax and wane. Dear brother, Allah Ta'ala is not like that. This is an absolute principle that He is not like

that. And when He is not like that, then think for yourself:
What can Allah Ta'ala gain by your punishment?

However, if you wish to summon punishment onto yourself then that is your affair! In any case, this is a most beautiful ayet, is it not?

Dear brethren, one's gaze should fall on all the ayat whenever one recites the Qur'an Sharif. So, in conjunction with this one take the following: Allah Ta'ala is saying, "I have already stated to you:
Your Lord hath prescribed for Himself mercy. (S.6.A.54.)

15.SUBTLETIES OF QUR'ANIC LANGUAGE

ah! Just see! Over here the word "Rabb" has been used, whereas over there the word "Allah" has been used. The niceties and implications only the linguist, the expert in rhetoric, will appreciate - the subtle change in nuance slipped in unobtrusively occasioned by using the word "Rabb" here and the word "Allah" over there!
This is the reason why the linguists and literary experts of those days threw down their weapons in defeat and admitted that the words of the Qur'an Sharif can never be the words of a human being. You may have read or heard of "Sab'ah Mu'allaqah" [The Seven Suspended]. What used to happen was that from every region of Arabia the greatest poets, experts in the sciences of eloquence and rhetoric and highly qualified in the art of Arabic poetry, composed highly intricate and eloquent verses. A poet would hang up his written qasidah in the Ka'bah. Others would then scrutinise this qasidah. Somebody else would compose

something better and lower the first qasidah and suspend his above it. A third poet would compose something even more eloquent and suspend his qasidah right on top. In this way seven qasidas were suspended on the Ka'bah, hence the name given to these as "The Seven Suspended". This was in the Age of Jahiliyah (Ignorance). However, when these very poets heard the Qur'an Sharif they confessed "It is quite obvious that this Qur'an is the Word of Allah - the Kalamullah! It can never be the word of any human being!" From then onwards the custom of hanging up qasidas of poets on the Ka'bah came to an end.

The Jinnat also testified to the Qur'an Sharif being the Word of Allah Ta'ala: Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) was making Fajr salat when the Jinnat arrived on the scene and stood listening. Merely by listening they brought iman. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) did not even have to extend an invitation to them to accept iman! They attested "This is the Kalamullah! It can never be the words of any human being!"

To continue: Haq Ta'ala is saying, "I have already stated to you:
Your Rabb, your Nourisher and Sustainer, has made it compulsory on Himself to be merciful'."

Is this not beautifully put? "Therefore, conclude from this, can I ever cause you any difficulty, or punish you unnecessarily? Yes, if you wish for punishment, if your attitude is that you will not reform without My punishment befalling you, that you will not mend your ways without being beaten, then that is your affair!" Does a loving father like beating his child without a good reason? He will explain to him

time and again and try to make him understand, but if the child does not take heed then he will beat him to correct him. Obviously he will not beat him out of pleasure! And - Allah Ta'ala forbid! - if he were unintentionally to strike him in such a way that the stick wounds the child, immediately the father will feel remorseful. He will get the doctor to attend to him. He will see to his treatment. If it was his purpose to cause injury, why call the doctor? Why do tears stream from his eyes? The blow was not intentional, but accidental. He is now regretful. If this is the condition of the father, the rabb-e-majazi (the father is referred to as the figurative or substitute nourisher), then will Zate Bari Ta'ala send down punishment for no reason? But if you want punishment to descend, then it is your affair. Allah Ta'ala is stating, "I have already stated that from My side I have made it incumbent upon Myself to be merciful. If you wish otherwise, it is your affair. However, there are some amongst you that, even though punishment descends on you, you are not prepared to believe. So much so, there are even some who may be sent to Jahannam and in Jahannam they will plead, 'Take us out of Jahannam and send us back to the world then we will bring iman on You'. If this were to be done and if they were to be taken out of Jahannam and are sent into the world again then, too, they will not bring iman!" Some are like this. Who can make such people understand?

To continue: Allah Ta'ala states, "When I have made it incumbent on Myself to show mercy, what will I gain by punishing you?" What will it benefit Allah Ta'ala by punishing you? What affectionate words! How full of muhabbat are these tones not! Allah Ta'ala continues, "If you keep on showing gratitude..." Let us stop to ponder. Ponder over your existence. Who made it possible? These limbs and

different parts of the body - who has given them? Out of all the creation no other creation has been given what you, O Insan, has been given! "The first stage of gratitude is this, that you believe in Me as you should - believe in My Zat (Being) with the Sifat (Attributes)." With what beatitude has it not been said!
The short ayet with which I started .I find most entrancing, absolutely enchanting!

Let us now combine all the ayat: Your Rabb, your Nourisher and Sustainer, has made it incumbent on Himself to show mercy. Therefore - it follows according to the laws of logic - what will He gain by punishing you? Will there be an increase in His glory and majesty? And if you keep on living this way, living with gratitude as mu'minin bandas (believing bondsmen), without showing any ingratitude for His ne'mats (blessings), then there will only be mercy upon mercy! The ayet ends: "Allah Ta'ala is ever appreciative of you."

Note that the word "Allah" appears here, and not "Rabb". The term "Allah" denotes that Being Who is such and such, such and such - that is, all the attributes of perfection are combined in that Being Who is absolutely pure and free of all faults and deficiencies. Despite this absolute perfection He states, "If you are mu'minin and remain as My bandas (bondsmen), then you have a great worth and value with Me In the word "alima" we have been shown: "I am well aware of this gratitude of yours and your iman and ikhlas (sincerity) and the condition of the heart (which is the site of ikhlas). So, why should I not value you? Especially so, when you have effaced from within yourself certain other passions solely out of consideration for Me. You have left off all of these on My saying so and out of consideration for Me. It is in My knowledge that, being a mu'min, you are remaining as a grateful

bandah. So, if I do not value you, who else will? I am One who is highly appreciative." As Allah Ta'ala states at a different place:

And whoso desireth the Hereafter and striveth for it with the effort necessary, being a believer; for such, their effort findeth favour (with their Lord).(S.17.A.19.)

16.INDEBTEDNESS

The pre-requisite of being mu'min has been laid down. "...This effort on your part is of great value in My eyes." The words "mashkوr" and "shukr" that is applied to Zate Bari Ta'ala in the Qur'an Sharif means "One who values." (On this basis) in our idiom we would say, "We say shukriah to you." This is a phrase used day and night. For example: Somebody gives you an item in sheer happiness. If it is an elder you would say, "Shukriah!" If it is somebody junior to you, and he does something agreeing with your tabiyet, you would say, "Jazakallah!" So, a younger person we will thank by saying, "Jazakallah! Khairul-Jaza'!" and an elder we would thank by saying, "Shukriah!"

On the other hand Zate Bari Ta'ala says to this insignificant insan, this human born of an insignificant drop of sperm, who has brought iman on Zate Bari Ta'ala merely by Him saying so, and is now involved in His obedience. What does Haq Ta'ala say to him, this inferior creation? In other words "Shukriah to you!"

Ponder! Think about this! This is pure patronage, otherwise how can an inferior be addressed with "shukriah"? A lesser one should be told "Jazakallah." However, Zate Bari Ta'ala is so happy, is so happy at his listening to Him and being obedient to Him that He says, "You have great value with Me!" This is Sunnate-Ilahi - the

system that Allah Ta'ala follows. "You have made Me happy, therefore I will keep you happy!" Is Allah Ta'ala indebted to the bandah? Not at all! This is for the benefit of the bandah. Allah Ta'ala is not indebted to anybody.

Take this illustration again: A father advises the son out of concern for him and the son accepts the advice. Is the father now indebted to the son? Not at all. It is the other way round: the son is indebted to the father for having advised him for his benefit. Yet the father will say, "Wah Wah! Wah Wah! You have brightened our name! You have erased all the evil of your previous actions." Nobody will now mention these past activities - or will they?

Take another illustration: Who takes note of a poor person? Nobody. Take a person who was absolutely poverty stricken or destitute, but has now become very wealthy. Those who had no time for him when he was poor will now treat him with respect. He will now be honoured. Those who looked at him with contempt will now be respectful and will be gracious towards him when he visits: "Please do come in. Quickly, bring a chair for our visitor!" Whereas previously when this person was down-and-out, and he came, nobody took any notice of him. He had to sit on the floor in one corner. Ponder. Do such occurrences not take place?

The point is that with an improvement, the previous sorry state is forgotten. This is what Allah Ta'ala is stating. What loving and affectionate statements is He not making! How much cheer is He not bringing to the heart! How much encouragement is He not giving! Is He not giving encouragement? What benefit is there for Allah Ta'ala? Yet, when the bandah has brought iman and thrown himself

into His obedience then Haq Ta'ala encourages and spurs him on further, just like a loving and affectionate father.

We can thus conclude that to give encouragement is Sunnate-Ilahi. To bring cheer to the heart (dil-jo'i) is Sunnate-Ilahi. To spur somebody on is Sunnate-Ilahi. To make a person happy is Sunnate- Ilahi. Whereas Allah Ta'ala is not in need of it. Do you understand the point?

The point I was making is that some issues are such that, in appearance, they do not seem to be ibadat. But what do we know? Yes, those with knowledge will know that these are also part of zikrullah, that these are also included in ibadat.

17.ATTEMPTING AND ACHIEVING

Can anybody fulfil perfectly and completely those commands that have been given in accordance to the shan of Allah Ta'ala - in conformity to His grandeur and majestic status? Never but never! That order that Allah Ta'ala has given to be carried out, in the time set for it, in the manner it is to be done, in keeping with the shan of Haq Ta'ala, can anybody carry out that task to that degree of perfection? Never. However, this person who carries out that task in the set time, yet unable to do it according to the shan of Zate Bari Ta'ala, nevertheless Allah Ta'ala looks at the effort with a gaze of appreciation: "My bandah has made an effort. Where is he able to do so at the level of My Zat (Being)? Yet, I know that he did it according to his capabilities, weak as he is. He attempted it. Therefore, he is of value and appreciated in My gaze. Therefore, do not fall into too deep research and inquiry, into too deep introspection and mystification, into too deep thought and anxiety.

On the other hand, that day in which you feel that you have performed a task befitting the shan of Allah Ta'ala that is the day of mourning for you! In other words, it is a day of immense grieving. The very audacity! "O puny bondsman! Do you consider that your performance is at the level of My grandeur and majesty?" Better is that day when you humbly submitted, "This is the extent of my effort. I have tried my level best. Where can I do anything befitting the grandeur and majesty of Haq Ta'ala?" Where is it possible to do anything befitting the shan of Haq Ta'ala? Astighfirullah!

O ye brothers! O ye salikun! O ye zakirun! O ye talibun! O ye mutiyqun! Do you understand? This is encouragement - instilling courage for those who have work to do! Have you understood the points made?

18.A SINNER ENTERS A MASJID

It comes in the Hadith sharif that when a mu'min bandah sets out to perform his namaz and he reaches the door of the masjid then the mala'ikah attempt to stop him from entering. The reason being that he had committed some sins previous to this. And sins constitute filth and pollution. Now, how can the mala'ikah allow such a person to enter the masjid, the Royal chamber of Allah Ta'ala, in this condition? He thus asks Allah Ta'ala...

To digress a bit: The communication between Allah Ta'ala and the mala'ikah is instantaneous. An instant also is a time period, but here there is not even a time period. To illustrate this let us take the wireless (radio). These modern inventions make it easier to explain and understand. How much time does it take to

communicate by radio? It is virtually instantaneous. Very early on I was in Pakistan. I had not as yet travelled by plane. Somebody took me to see a plane. When we were there I asked one of the officers, "I have heard that when a plane is flying a person can speak to another person flying in another plane. How does this work?" He said, "Quite right. Wait, I'll show you." He informed somebody of what he was going to do and then placed the earphone set on my head. He reassured me, "Do not worry, Hadratji!" There were four or five others standing there. A conversation then took place between the other party and myself. Not even a second's delay. Do you understand? Here there may still be fractions of seconds involved, but communication between Zate Bari Ta'ala and the mala'ikah does not even involve that much of a delay. This illustration of a wireless has been given merely to make one understand.

To continue: The mala'ikah says, "How can I allow him to present himself in Your Royal chamber in this condition, contaminated with filth as he is?" One is prone to commit some sin or other, a "big" sin or a "small" sin and become besmeared with "big" filth or "small" filth. One's inner condition is known to the mala'ikah. If somebody were to be summoned by the wazir for a social meeting would he go wearing clothes which have stains and blotches? Obviously not. The wazir will see only the external, but Zate Bari Ta'ala and the mala'ikah know the inner condition as well.

That is why it is written about a person intending entering the toilet: There are mala'ikah with him - these are the Kiramin-katibin, one on the right side and one on the left side. The one on the right side writes down the nékis (good deeds) and

the one on the left writes down the sins. These are the C.I.D.'s, the detectives, who watch over all his actions. If only one can have this awareness all the time it is also an achievement. Subhanallah! That these two mala'ikah are performing the work of C.I.D.'s is referred to in the Qur'an Sharif in the following ayat:
When the two Receivers (guardian angels) receive (him), seated on the right hand and on the left, He uttereth no word but there is with him an observer ready. (S.50. A. 17-18)

Therefore, on the day of Qiyamat every atom of good deed and every atom of evil that has not been washed off with the waters of taubah, will be presented in one's Book of Deeds (Namah A'mal), as Allah Ta'ala states at another place:
And whoso doeth good an atom's weight will see it then And whoso doeth ill an atom's weight will see it then. (S.99.A.7-8.)

Allah Ta'ala is reminding us, warning us.

19.IN THE TOILET

To continue: It is written that this person now enters the toilet. He thinks that he is now alone in the toilet and that there is nobody else there, because the mala'ikah Kiramin-katibin do not enter - they remain waiting outside. He now thinks of Allah Ta'ala just in his heart. Because it is not permissible to make the zikr of Allah Ta'ala in the toilet with one's tongue, he thought of Allah Ta'ala, he remembered Him and he made His zikr just in his heart. On the other hand, if he did not do this, but he thought to himself that there is nobody present. Even the Kiramin-katibin are not present, so he indulges in some self-enjoyment, playing and stimulating

himself. He then comes out thinking that nobody is aware of his self-indulgence. Now, we find there are experts at physiognomy - those who claim to assess a person's character merely by looking at his face - this being so, then how can the Kiramin-katibin not know what he did while he was in the toilet?

So, when he leaves the toilet, and he had remained in the toilet with nékies, as in the first instance, then the mala'ikah on the right will write down nékies for him, even though he may not have said anything with his tongue, the zikr of Allah Ta'ala having been made in his heart. The nékies of the heart are written down. If, on the other hand, he performed some unbecoming and indecent act while in the toilet, the person having the misconception that he is alone and that nobody knows about it, then the mala'ikah on the left will write it down.

Do you understand? If this awareness exists that nothing can be concealed, then jalwat and khalwat are equal. Then being in seclusion or being amongst others would have the same significance! Is my voice reaching you? Jalwat and khalwat will be the same. Who is there present in the toilet with him? Even though the Kiramin-katibin are not present in the toilet yet they write down one's activities. They are such.

To continue: This person is proceeding to the Royal chamber of Allah Ta'ala i.e. the masjid, when he is stopped from entering by the mala'ikah. The mala'ikah says, "How can I allow him to present himself in Your Royal chamber in this condition, contaminated with filth as he is?" Immediately the order of Allah Ta'ala is given, "O mala'ikah! Lift up the sins that this person is laden with! Remove the filth that

is in him and on top of him!" Do you see the bounty of Rabbul-alamin, of that Being Who is our Sustainer and our Nourisher?

The mala'ikah immediately removes his sins. The person now enters the Royal parlour of Allah Ta'ala, the masjid, in a pure (pak) condition. This is something to ponder over. The moment the filth of his evil actions has been lifted from him, he enters and he performs his namaz, in whatever manner. He then departs from the masjid, but the mala'ikah is waiting for him on the outside. He has no option. He then asks Allah Ta'ala, - this is from Hadith sharif - "The impurity (na-paki) which I had lifted from him, shall I settle it on him again?" Haq Ta'ala replies. "When you have lifted off from him his sins, why burden him again? Throw them away!"

Do you see? Allah Ta'ala has stated...... Allah Ta'ala has made it compulsory on Himself to show mercy. Can you see the application of this incumbency? Is this not an act of love and affection? Does it not behove us to sacrifice ourselves on His orders?

20.ALLAH TA'ALA IS APPRECIATIVE

Just see further: We know the poor quality of our deeds. Yet Zate Bari Ta'ala states: "And Allah Ta'ala is appreciative and well- knowing of one's deeds", You have made namaz. You have not performed it with the intention of showing any person. Deliberately you did not make the niyet of showing the people. The niyet was for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. So, Allah Ta'ala knows the condition of the heart, the sincerity, the ikhlas, that the deliberate intention was to please Allah Ta'ala, and not - Allah forbid! - to show the people. On the other hand how can he

perform any deed the way it should be performed, according to the shan of Allah Ta'ala? No, never. Despite this, Allah Ta'ala's attitude is, "Seeing your effort is for Me, and not for the creation. And seeing it was done for My sake, if I do not accept who is there to accept? In whatever manner it has been performed, the point is that it has been performed. Therefore, qabیl! Accepted!"

Do you understand, dear brethren? BUT, on performing namaz! The above point is valid if one performs namaz. On not performing namaz there is no question of having hopes of acceptance! Therefore, first continue with your effort, then have hope.

So, now when he leaves the masjid he leaves pure - cleansed and clean. Allah Ta'ala has purified him without him having made the effort himself at purifying himself and He has allocated a servant, a mala'ikah, to cleanse him. So, upon leaving the masjid he needs to have some prudence and sensibility, an awareness of his state of cleanliness. And, especially seeing that he has now even heard this with his own ears, should he now contaminate himself again? He should rather, as far as is possible, take care and be vigilant to safeguard himself from obscenity, from sins, from evil, from flagrant undignified acts and from scandalous and disgraceful acts.

These are aspects that one should sacrifice oneself for - for that person with a sharif-ut-taba' and a salim-ul-qalb (an honourable nature and a heart that is conducive to accepting goodness). Therefore, now that you have left the masjid cleansed, keep a close scrutiny on yourself. Keep pondering. Keep on safeguarding

your gaze. Keep on restraining your tongue. Keep your ears also curbed. Keep your feet also from being wayward: do not travel to just any old place; do not go to places where acts of disobedience take place; save your footsteps from walking to places of iniquity. Do not deliberately bring evil thoughts into your heart. Why? The reason is that Allah Ta'ala has said that we should safeguard our feet, safeguard our ears and safeguard our eyes. It is stated in the Qur'an- e-Pak:

...every act of hearing or of seeing or of (feeling in) the heart will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning). (S.17.A.36)

21.PLACES OF EVIL

Furthermore, Allah Ta'ala states in the Qur'ane Pak:.....

It is the shan, the honour and dignity, of a mu'min Muslim that he does not go to places of evil. He does not sit in places of iniquity. Do you understand? This is the dignified and honourable status of a mu'min Muslim. Allah Ta'ala does not want him to sit in places of evil.

Allah Ta'ala states further: Never mind sitting in wrong places but...

If he were to pass by any evil places, places where people are sitting involved in futile activities, if this mu'min were pass to that way, he proceeds with his eyes cast down, with complete dignity and utmost grace. He passes by in such a manner that it is apparent that he does not look with contempt at those involved in those wrong activities and that he does not consider himself to be superior to them.

Wah! Wah! What a splendid statement! Is my voice reaching you or not?

To repeat: When he passes by people involved in futile activities, "marru; kirama" - he proceeds in a very cultured manner, that by his manner of behaviour there is no sign of him showing any superiority and there is no evidence of him looking with contempt at them and considering himself to be better than them. The mu'min does not even incline towards them. He does not even look at them. Neither does he think himself superior, nor does he consider them inferior. Provided that he is a talib! So, never mind sitting there - rather he passes by such places. This is the shan of a mu'min Muslim.

Coming back to what I had said initially, that some actions are such that externally they do not appear to be zikrullah, nevertheless these actions are carried out to encourage others and for their dil-jo'i - to make them happy. In this event they are also included in zikrullah. They are also acts enjoined by the shariat (mamیr-behi) from among many other acts.

22.A PERSON'S TEMPERAMENT: AN IMPORTANT MAS'ALAH

What was the reason for bringing this topic to my lips, and mentioning the incident concerning Haji Imdadullah sahib (r.a.)? This is something I have not mentioned before, but the purpose is to mention something connected to the tape recorder that has been placed here. Leave it here - I have already given permission previously. However, my tabiyet does not approve of it. In the first instant it jolts me - it causes me an inner agitation. My tabiyet feels ashamed. This does not mean that you should not record. I am merely intimating the condition of my temperament.

What I mean to indicate is that there are certain matters that are not harmful from the dunyawi (worldly) point of view, and they are not harmful from the point of view of the akhirat (hereafter). The dunyawi harm would be harm to jan (life and limb), harm to mal (wealth) and harm to abrى (honour). Harm to honour is considered to be severer than harm to life and limb and to wealth. It is indeed considered a very severe harm. Yes, that person who has no sensitivity to and awareness of disgrace he is no admi (human being). So, worldly harm would be bodily harm, material harm and harm to honour and dignity. What would constitute Dini harm, harm to one's akhirat? This would be sin (gunah).

So, in placing the tape recorder here what bodily or material harm is there to me or to my honour? To the contrary, in the eyes and in the thinking of others, it is a means of greater honour. The thoughts running through their minds most probably are as follow: "Oho! Just see how great a personality is Hadhrat! Just see the people listening to him! Also, how attentively are they not listening! And they are even taping his talk! What great worth do they not place on his talks!" Such thinking is a basis of honour and not harm. So, there is no harm in it for me, neither worldly nor in the hereafter.

Any harm to one's hereafter is intolerable. Obedience in such matters is not wajib.
A statement of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) states:
And do not obey in the transgression of Allah Ta'ala's orders.

On the other hand, it is also wrong to think that people may say what they like but we are unconcerned. Is my voice reaching you?

23.HAYA - AND WHAT PEOPLE THINK

Remember! Haya (a sense of modesty and shame) is a very virtuous quality. The Hadith sharif states:

Haya is a branch of iman.

Haya is a good quality. Insan abstains from a lot of evil because of it. If one's sense of shame were to disappear then to abstain from evil becomes very difficult. To the extent of one's haya one will abstain even from the minutest of evils. Haya and a sense of shame are great qualities. These are branches of iman.

Thus, to think, "Aré Mia! People may say what they like, I could not be bothered in the least!", this is not an admi (civilised human being). The reason is that that person who has a conducive temperament, a respectable disposition, will be extremely concerned. Even though he may not be guilty of the actions people attribute to him - he may be uninvolved and completely pak - yet he will be affected. When he comes to know that this type of filthy rumours concerning him have spread from people's lips his temperament will definitely feel aggrieved. He is blameless, nevertheless he feels hurt when such talks reach his ears. So, that person who thinks to himself, "I could not be bothered in the least!" is no admi - he is not one whom we would call respectable and cultured.

I have proof of this. And not only one proof but many:

Take the case of Ummul-mu'minin Hadhrat Aishah (R.A.): Was she slandered or not? The incident is mentioned in Surah Nur. Yet she was innocent, was she not? Yet a hue and cry arose. Hadhrat A'ishah (R.A.) herself was unaware of the slander

against her. An elderly lady (Hadhrat Umme-Mustah (R.A.) brought her attention to it: "Do you know something? There is a hue and cry about you. This is the slander levelled against you." Yet she was innocent. She was chaste. Allah Ta'ala revealed ten ayats in the Qur'an Sharif concerning her chasteness. (S.24 a.11 .). However, by these slanderous statements having come to the lips of the world what happened to her? When she heard about them she developed a fever, even though she was pure and chaste.

So, a person who thinks, "Ah! Let the people think what they like, I am unconcerned!" is he an admi, taking into account that Ummul- mu'minin Hadhrat A'ishah (R.A.) who was siddiqah, faqihah, alimah, abidah, zahidah, arifah, zowjah-mutahharah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) was also affected and developed a fever, chaste and pure as she was? Therefore, it is imperative to save oneself from such situations where people have an opportunity to pass comments. So much so that Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) has stated:
(Always) save yourself from situations of slander.

As I was saying: in keeping the tape recorder here there is no Dini or worldly benefit for me. Nevertheless, from the aspect of my disposition I sense it to be shameful and a barrier. However, it does not mean that you should not bring it tomorrow. This I had already clarified earlier. There may be some who may feel, "Oho! Hadhrat's temperament is bashful about the tape recorder. He finds it distasteful. Therefore we will not bring it tomorrow." The answer I have already given - this is a question of disposition.

In any case, going back to what I was saying initially and had mentioned the situation with Haji Imdadullah sahib (r.a.) that he was conversing with others in emulating Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) with passionate love for the sunnat. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) has stated that deal with people according to their habits and akhlaq. So, whatever type of person presented himself to Rasulullah(R.A,) he behaved towards them accordingly. For example, if a farmer came to him then he would converse about farming; if a merchant came to him he would converse with him along lines of business. There were lessons in these. Every action and statement of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) contained lessons and teachings for us. If our behaviour is according to these criteria, then it is sunnat, otherwise not.

24.HUMOUR IN ISLAM

For instance: Some Sahaba (R.A.) enquired..... (You have studied Bukhari sharif, in which there is a chapter on "Humour". Shama'il Tirmizi sharif also contains these references.) To continue: some Sahaba (R.A.) asked, "O Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam)! You prevent us from being jocular, but you yourself are jocular?" Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) replied, "In my jocularity there is ilm and lessons, which are not to be found in your jocularity. That is why I forbid you."

However, when a person also reaches such a comprehensive status of dignity, then he will be an exception to the rule. Occasionally, with the niyet (intention) of sunnat, in order to bring cheer to another's heart - as a means of bringing joy - it would be permissible. On the other hand, if one's jocularity is the cause of creating

discord and enmity, and the other person is offended - no matter how great a friend he may be but the jocularity is of this nature - he should refrain. He would be committing a sin. We are speaking of making hearts happy, but here his heart is grief-stricken. How can this be bringing cheer to him? How can this be considered to be making him happy? An injury has been caused. That is why Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) stated, "There is a difference between my humour and yours."

If one is not permitted to be a party to jocularity, then - Allah Ta'ala forbid! Allah Ta'ala forbid! - how can one ever be a party to others' unnecessary, futile and nonsensical deeds and activities and sinning?

Some instances of jocularity have great lessons in them. An incident comes to mind concerning a Sahabi(R.A.) and which is related in Shama'il Tirmizi sharif: The Sahabi's (R.A.) name was Zahir. He was a peasant, i.e. he lived in a farming area. Occasionally when he came to Madina Munowwarah he used to bring gifts from the farm to present to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). In reciprocation Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) used to present him also with something. So that whenever he came, Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) used to comment, "He is our farm, and we are his city." It so happened that once when the Sahabi Zahir (R.A.) came to Madina Munowwarah and was proceeding towards the bazar, Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) also came out of his home and proceeded in the same direction. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam)recognised him, upon which Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) quietly came up to him from behind and laid his hands on his shoulders. Bear in

mind that Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had great strength in his arms. The Sahabi Zahir(R.A.) did not recognise who it was, and asked, "Who are you?" Through the corner of his eyes his gaze fell on the mubarak hands and he realised immediately that it was Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). Immediately he stepped backwards with the intention of pressing his back against the mubarak breast of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) with this thought in mind, "When will this opportunity arise again? If my back were to touch the mubarak breast of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) I will possibly be saved from the fire of Jahannam!" With his hands still on the shoulders of Zahir(R.A.). Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) said, "Who is there who will buy this slave?" Abdullah - the bondsman of Allah; the slave of Allah. This was in a manner of speaking. Zahir(R.A.) was not a slave in the shari' sense of the word. But was he not a slave of Allah Ta'ala - Abdullah? How did Zahir(R.A.) respond?

Is my voice reaching you?

Zahir r.a. said, "O Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam)! Who will buy me? (That person who is of no use to himself, how can he be of use to others?) Who will buy me?" Huzur Akram (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam),(the sheikh), replied, "That is what you are saying. Ask Allah and the Rasul of Allah of what degree of worth you are, of what great value you are!"

This incident appears, on face value, to be of a humourous nature, but in reality it has great ta'lim (lesson/s - teaching/s) in it. It is proof of ease in methodology. What great and glad tidings are not contained in it! Huzur Akram (sallallahu

alaiyhi wassallam) is congratulating him and that he is happy with him. Credence should be placed on this statement.

25.A MAS'ALAH OF SULUK

From this also is proven the mas'alah concerning the relationship between the sheikh and the murid. What does the murid say and what reply does the sheikh give? The sheikh may state, "Mubarak! Congratulations!" By the sheikh's words of comfort there is peace of mind and tranquillity. Therefore the salek should not consider the sheikh's ta'lim to be superficial. He should consider it to be truthful and investigative (haqiqi tahqiq), because every statement of the sheikh is based on truth (waqi'i).

A second aspect should also become quite clear. What is it? This has to be explained. Very briefly: The question arises as to why did Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) place his hands on the shoulders and why did he not place his hands over the eyes, as is the custom here? What we see happening here is that a friend creeps up silently from behind and then clasps his hands over the eyes of the friend to see if he can be recognised: "Tell me who is it?" Now why did Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) not place his mubarak hands over the eyes of the Sahabi r.a. but placed them on his shoulders? The reason is that by placing the hands over the eyes a person becomes terrified. A burden settles on the heart.

So, Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) is giving the ta'lim that it is not correct that a mu'min should behave towards another mu'min in such a manner and in such ways as to cause a burden to settle on him. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi

wassallam) gave the ta'lim of placing the hands on the shoulders and not over the eyes. What was the reason for this? As explained: by suddenly placing the hands over the eyes the heart becomes agitated. A weight settles on the heart. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) has shown by his action that a mu'min should take the utmost care and precaution not to behave towards another mu'min in such a manner as to cause a burden to settle on his heart.

26.DU'A

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the kamil taufiq to continually practise and live our lives in accordance with this. Ameen.

Chapter No.:

12

1.INTRODUCTION

Alhamdu-lillah,Booklet Number Twelve is now ready, solely though the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of our sheikh (r.a.). In preparing this booklet there is a slight departure from previous issues in that this is a translation, not of a majlis, but

of a lecture on Tawhid delivered by Hadhrat Maulana Masihullah Khan sahib (r.a.). The place and date of deliverance are not stated. Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani sahib had it published in Urdu in Hijri1411 (1990). The foreword is by him.

A Hadith sharif that creates a lot of concern is the following:

Hadhrat Abu Hurarairah (R.A.) narrates that Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) said:
"Be prompt in doing good deeds (before you are overtaken) by turbulence which would be like a part of the dark night. During (that stormy period) a man would be a believer in the morning and turn to disbelief in the evening, or he would be a believer in the evening and turn to disbelief in the morning, and sell his faith for worldly goods." (Muslim sharif)

Faith - iman - is that precious gift that needs to be safeguarded at all costs. What is iman? What are its ramifications? It is in answer to these and many other questions concerning iman that the subject of Tawhid has been chosen for Booklet Number Twelve.

2.AN INTRODUCTION TO HADHRAT WAKIL AHMED SHERWANI SAHIB (R.A.)

Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib (r.a.) is the illustrious son of an illustrious father - his father being Hadhrat Shah Maulana Hafiz Jalil Ahmed Sherwani sahib (r.a.), who was also known as Piyare-Mia, khalifah of Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali

Thanwi (r.a.). Mention of him has been made in the foreword of Booklet Number Ten.

Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib (r.a.) was born in Thanah Bhawan, in the house of Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (r.a.). Although the family was originally from Aligarrh, Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib's (r.a.) father stayed for seventeen to eighteen years in the company of Hadhrat Thanwi (r.a.), staying in his house, this being the reason why Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib (r.a.) was born there. After his birth he was blessed by being fed some dates chewed by Hadhrat Thanwi (r.a.).

His dini education started in "Khanqah Imdadiyah Ashrafiyah" in Thanah Bhawan. Two years after Hadhrat Thanwi's (r.a.) demise Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib's (r.a.) father returned to Aligarrh where his father taught him the initial Arabic kitabs. After the formation of Pakistan his father settled in Lahore and became engrossed in the establishment of the "Majlis Siyanatul Muslimin, Pakistan" - for which purpose he had taken up residence in Pakistan - and Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib's (r.a.) completed his studies in Lahore, graduating in 1957 as an alim and mufti in "Jamiah Ashrafiyah".

Two years after qualifying he commenced teaching at the same institute and he has been there ever since. He is also the Deputy Mufti at the same institute. He is also tirelessly involved in furthering the aims and objects of the "Majlis Siyanatul Muslimin, (Pakistan)". As mentioned previously in Booklet Number Ten, the "Majlis Siyanatul Muslimin,(Pakistan)" was established by his father, Hadhrat

Shah Maulana Hafiz Jalil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib (r.a.), to give practical force to the all-comprehensive programme that Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (r.a.) had laid down for the reformation of the Muslim Ummah. Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib (r.a.) is a member of the Shurah of "Majlis Siyanatul Muslimin,(Pakistan)". He is also editor of the monthly magazine, "As-Siyanah", that the organisation prints and distributes. He has eight other publications to his name.

3.CONNECTION WITH HADHRAT MAULANA MASIHULLAH KHAN SAHIB (R.A.)

Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib (r.a.) is the nephew of our Hadhrat Maulana Masihullah Khan Sahib (r.a.), his mother being our Hadhrat's (r.a.) sister. Besides that Hadhrat Wakil Sahib is also our Hadhrat's (r.a.) son-in-law, being married to one of our Hadhrat's (r.a.) daughters. Hadhrat Wakil Sahib is also our Hadhrat's (r.a.) khalifah.

Dr. I. M.

[Hereunder follows the foreword to "Al-Tawhidul Haqiqi" as penned by Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib (r.a.)]

4.FOREWORD

This "At-Tawhid-ul-Haqiqi", which is in your hands and appears in the form of a treatise, is an all-encompassing, forceful w'az (lecture) which arif-billah, Hadhrat Maulana Shah Masihullah Khan Sahib, Jalalabadi (r.a.), Khalifah-Arshad of Hakim-ul-Ummat, Mujaddid-ul-Millat, Hadhrat Thanwi (R.A.), had delivered somewhere. This w'az maintains its vibrancy by perusing it and reading it; it is an

excellent rendering on "tawhid"; it refreshes one's iman; it is a magnificent gift for the mu'min (believer); it is an amazing source of employment for writers and lecturers. Reading it or listening to it mollifies the stoniest of stony hearts; and it reveals the way (to guidance) to the antagonists of tawhid!

It has been delivered in a manner both charming and pleasing, and in a mode that it involuntarily draws every reader towards his Ma'bیd- Haqiqi (i.e. Allah Ta'ala). Every Muslim, in general, and every writer and every public speaker, in particular, should read this w'az repeatedly and make it his/her prized object.

Wakil Ahmed (may he be forgiven).

Baitul-Ashraf

78 A Model Town

Lahore.

5.THE REALITY OF TAWHID-THE BASIC PILLARS OF ISLaM

The mubarak (honoured/ blessed) statement of Huzیr-e-Akram (i.e. Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is that Islam is founded on five basic pillars. Firstly, to bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah Ta'ala, and that Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is the bondsman and messenger of Allah Ta'ala; secondly, to perform salat (i.e. the five daily compulsory prayers) with punctuality; thirdly, to give zakat (i.e. the compulsory charity for those who are of means); fourthly, to keep the fasts of Ramadhan sharif; and fifthly, to perform Haj (i.e. the pilgrimage to Makkah).From the above translation of the

Hadith sharif you will have come to realise that the foundation of Islam has been placed on five items. Also, it will be known to everybody that only when the foundation of any item is firmly established on some definite aspects then only will that item and structure be considered to be perfect and solid, worth relying on, and it will then qualify for producing peace of mind. Otherwise it will cause a variety of apprehensions and a dispersion of thoughts, making life veritably bitter. This being so, why then is constructive benefit not taken from the accepted principles and known prerequisites of the Islamic foundations? If even one foundation of Islam becomes weak or deficient in a person then that person's Islam will be shaky and defective, not strong and perfect. A statement of Hadhrat Umar (R.A.) is as follows:
"We are such a nation that Allah Ta'ala has blessed us with izzat (honour) with Islam."

These are the five fundamental teachings of Islam. When one has developed firmness and permanence in them will one then attain that jah aur jalal (prestige and grandeur), that izzat aur hashmat (honour and dignity), whereby one will then be called a kamil (exemplary/ perfect) Muslim, and one will be able to live a life full of izzat (honour) because one has fulfilled the call inherent in:
"We are such a nation that Allah Ta'ala has blessed us with izzat (honour) with Islam."

For the Muslim, who is also a claimant of another life (in the Hereafter) and has firm belief in it, it is his primary fardh (compulsory duty) to grasp firmly on to the five fundamentals of Islam and to remain steadfast on them. The command of

Allah Ta'ala is:

All of you grasp firmly to the silsilah (rope) of Allah Ta'ala. (S.3 a.102)

This rope, this silsilah, is veritably this Islam on which we have been given the instruction to hold steadfastly on to! Consequently, in order to be exemplary (kamil) Muslims, in order to live with honour and respect, in order to attain a life of serenity and comfort in both the worlds, and in order to be blessed with the true pleasure and happiness of our Ahkamul-Hakimin (i.e. Allah Ta'ala), it is necessary to come to know the details of these five items and to understand their reality. And this is the primary lesson of our lives.

6.THE BASIC PRINCIPLE

From amongst the principles the first principle is the Kalimah- Shahadat, that is:

I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah Ta'ala and I bear witness that Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is His bondsman and messenger.

This is a basic principle for the following reason:

Everybody knows that in Din (religion) there are various categories, some of which are principles and others are branches of these. Then, among the principles, one is a basic principle and the others are ordinary principles. Who is not aware that the principles take precedence over the branches, and also that, among the principles, the basic principle takes precedence and priority over all the other principles? This means that the basic principle is such that all the branches are dependant on it.

Thus, whoever accepts the basic principle enunciated above will be called a Muslim.

Therefore, the first basic aspect without which no virtuous actions are acceptable, without which no ibadat (worship) is beneficial, without which no ta'at (obedience) is a basis for qurb-e-Khudawandi (closeness to Allah Ta'ala), is this Din-e-Muhammedi and Mazhab-e- Islam (i.e. the religion of Islam as brought to us by Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam).
The (only) Din (acceptable) by Allah Ta'ala is Islam. S.3 a.19

Another statement of Bari Ta'ala (Allah) is as follows:
That person who desires and searches for another din besides Islam, then (this other din and mazhab) will never be accepted. S.3 a.85

7.THE STATUS OF ISLAM AND IMAN

This status of Islam and iman is such that no matter how magnanimous a deed a person performs, but if he is not a Muslim then that deed has no worth. A person may undertake a thousand acts of mujahadah and riyadhat (special spiritual exercises) but if he is not a Muslim then there will be no beneficial results. It is in connection with such people that Bari Ta'ala states:
These are those people for whom there is nothing else in the Hereafter except the Fire (Jahannam - Hell), and whatever they did in the world will be in vain and of no effect. S.11 a.16

From this you would have come to realise the virtue of Islam and to what degree is the above principle fardh (compulsory) from among the fardh principles. Without

it there is absolutely no salvation, neither complete nor partial. This is the greatest ne'mat (blessing) from among the a'mal and fara'idh (deeds and compulsory acts).

By leaving out what is sunnat and mustahab (i.e. non-compulsory acts) there is reproof and it is also possible that there is no reproof. And by leaving out what is fardh and wajib there is punishment, even though it is possible that there is magfirat (forgiveness) without punishment. However, Islam and iman are such fara'idh that in their absence there is no situation except that of punishment. Punishment becomes compulsory, and that too permanently (da'imi-abad-ul-abad) - punishment for a time period that will never come to an end! This is because the absence of iman and Islam is kufr (blasphemy/ heathenism rejection of Islam and/or iman) and shirk (polytheism/ paganism), and in relation to kufr and shirk Bari Ta'ala states:

Verily, Allah Ta'ala will not forgive shirk, beside which He will forgive all (save) to whom He will. S.4 a.48

8.ISLAM AND IMAN AND UNITARIANISM

Upon this if any person perhaps has the doubt that this ayet (verse) states forgiveness for shirk and not kufr that there are some kuffar who are not mushrik (who do not make shirk) but are mawahid (unitarians, believing in One God), but reject Islam, and therefore asks, "So, where is there mention in this ayet that they will not be forgiven?" The answer to this is as follows: Firstly, kufr is that very entity which is contrary to Islam, whether it is associated with shirk or not. The punishment is the same for both. Secondly, at another place an ayet related to the kuffar also appears:

Those from amongst the people of the Book (Ahle-Kitab) and the mushrikin who have adopted kufr, will go to the Fire of Jahannam, wherein they will remain forever, (and) these are the worst of the creation. S.98 a.6

In this ayet the kuffar have been equated to the Ahle-Kitab (People of the Book) and the mushrikin, and they are also stated as entering Jahannam. Also, to dispute that entry into Jahannam means a stay for a short while, which does not necessitate a permanent stay, is incorrect. The reason is that it is incorrect to impute different meanings to one word in a single statement. Thus, when it has been proven that the stay for the mushrik is permanent then, it follows, that this is also proof that the stay for the kafir is also permanent, because the order applies to both in this ayet.

Also, another statement of Bari Ta'ala is as follows:
Verily, those who have become kafir and they have stopped (others) from the Path of Allah Ta'ala and they have remained as kafir and died (as such), then Allah Ta'ala will never forgive them. S.47 a.34

Thus, it is quite plain to see that the kafir will permanently be in punishment, from which it will also be understood that the kuffar will never be forgiven.

9.THE APPROPRIATENESS BETWEEN CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

This is also an answer to a doubt some people harbour. They ask, "Why does the Shariat (the laws of Islam) lay down permanent punishment for kufr? - whereas punishment should be appropriate to the crime. The crime is limited, but the punishment meted out is unlimited. For example: a particular kafir's age has reached fifty years and he has died in the state of kufr. So, the crime of kufr that he

has committed is only for a period of fifty years, but his punishment is going to be for an unlimited period, much longer than fifty years. What is the reason for this?"

FIRST ANSWER:

It is accepted that the punishment should be in conformity with the crime. However, it is accepted by everybody that conformity does not mean that the crime and the punishment should be equal in duration. If this were so, then a thief who is involved in stealing for a period of two hours should be sentenced by the judge to two hours of imprisonment! Nobody would say that such a judge is just. From this it is apparent that as far as crime and punishment are concerned the meaning is not that both should be in conformity with regard to the time-periods of both. However, the meaning is that the severity of the punishment should be in conformity with the severity of the crime.

Do you not know that in many actions the niyet (intention) also plays a big role? Reward and punishment are not dependant merely on the outward appearance. For example: A person is deceived into drinking alcohol unwittingly. There is no sin on him for this, even though the settings appear to be those of sin. As his intention was not to drink alcohol this is not a crime. On the other hand, take a person who goes to a bar with the intention of drinking alcohol. The bartender serves him sharbat instead of alcohol and he drinks it thinking that it is alcohol then this person will be sinful. The reason is that it was his intention to drink alcohol.

Take another example: A person in a dark room has sexual intercourse with a woman, thinking her to be a stranger (i.e. not his wife), but it turns out that she is his wife! He will be a sinner. In a similar manner, if he were to have sexual intercourse with his wife and imagines her to be some other woman in order to extract extra enjoyment, then too, he will be a sinner! The question is: why should he be a sinner? The reason is that his intention was that of having intercourse with a strange woman, even though the apparent setting was not of sin. On the contrary, take the situation where it is the first night of marriage and the groom (not having met his bride previously) mistakenly has sexual intercourse with some other woman (thinking her to be his bride), then the groom will not be a sinner. In technical terms this is called "Wati-bish-shubah". Any offspring conceived as a result will be legitimate. Iddat for the woman will be compulsory.

So, in a similar manner, is the situation of the kafir: Even though his crime is limited in time, but his intention was to remain in kufr for always, for he is virtually saying, "If I were to live for eternity I will remain in this condition of kufr." Therefore, in accordance with his niyet (intention) he will suffer everlasting punishment. [If his intention was not to remain in kufr forever, but to bring iman before he died, then he would not have waited but would have brought iman as soon as possible, seeing that death can occur at any moment - Tr.] In the same manner, the Islam of a Muslim appears to be for a limited period, but his niyet is, "If I were to remain alive I would remain steadfast on Islam forever." Therefore, he will be rewarded according to his intention and he will remain in Jannat forever.

SECOND ANSWER:

Kufr is an abrogation of Huqیq-e-Ilahi (rights of Allah Ta'ala). And, as Huqیq-e-Ilahi are unlimited, the punishment should also be commensurably unlimited.

THIRD ANSWER:

If one takes a person who is extremely capable and has all the excellent qualities to a very high degree but, at the same time, he is also guilty of treason, everybody knows what his punishment should be. It is obvious that he will be executed or exiled to a far distant land or be imprisoned for life. However, up to today no philosopher has ever thought of criticising this punishment and asked, "Why this permanent punishment?" The judge will not even have a whispering doubt that the sentence is unreasonable upon passing this sentence. However, when Khuda Ta'ala (Allah) does the same then one has a doubt about it! What type if iman is this and what type of Islam? To Allah Ta'ala do we belong and to Him is our return!

Essentially, it has been proven that if an individual is not obedient to the government in power all his excellent qualifications will not be able to save him, whether he be a very prominent scientist or mathematician, engineer or doctor, manufacturer or merchant, historian or publisher, poet or author, philosopher or sociologist, officer or ruler. All these accomplishments will not be able to save him from the punishment of having committed treason. Because of his having committed treason he will necessarily be liable to be sentenced to death or be imprisoned for life. Alas! For that person who commits treason against the state it is fully accepted that all his deeds and all his good qualities become nullified, whereas that person who commits treason against the Mightiest of Rulers -

Ahkamul- Hakimin (i.e. Allah Ta'ala) by not bringing iman - this being synonymous to treason that he does not accept the Laws - that the punishment for his treason is criticised and condemned!

Irshad-e-Rabbani (i.e. the statement of our Rabb) is as follows:

These are such people that, besides Jahannam, there is nothing for them (in the way of thawab, etc.) in the Hereafter, and whatever they did will in its entirety prove to be futile, and (in reality) whatever they are doing now also is without effect. S.11 a.16

10.LAWAZIM-E-MUHAQQIQIYAT

[The necessary qualities of a true scholar. Muhaqqiq: scholar/ philosopher/ one who has an in-depth knowledge of what is Truth.]

The above types of doubts are emitted from the lips and tongues of those who consider themselves to be firm and truthful Muslims, even considering themselves to be leaders of the nation and their reformers! The reason for such doubts arising is that these people think, "We are muhaqqiq!" All this corruptive thinking is the result of the claim to being a muhaqqiq, whereas one of the compulsory requisites of being a muhaqqiq is not to consider oneself to be a muhaqqiq, even though a person may be a qualified and excellent alim (scholar/ graduate of a Darul-ulىm). So, what of that person who is not a qualified alim and considers himself to be a muhaqqiq and allamah (scholar)? So much so that nowadays the knowledge of those people who consider themselves to be muhaqqiq is very limited. Let us take just one example: They consider imkan-e-zat (the mere possibility of something

existing)to be wujیb (the definite existence of that item - so much so that it is impossible for it to exist). Similarly, they consider imtina-e-'adi (something which is improbable - that which is not normally possible) to be imtina'-e-'aqli aur mahal (theoretically improbable and impossible). Having studied a bit of history, having learnt a bit of philosophy and having a passing acquaintance with modern literature they now consider themselves to be muhaqqiq! And when a person considers himself to be a muhaqqiq then the following line of reasoning predominates: "Whosoever opposes our opinions is also opposed to factual evidence and research." They then feel free to express whatever fanciful criticisms that cross their minds. One such criticism expressed by them is the one that has been discussed above.

11.TREASON WITH REGARD TO RISALAT

[Risalat - the acceptance of Hadhrat Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) as the final Rasul (Messenger) of Allah Ta'ala.]

Having dealt with that criticism, another criticism will now be discussed, the essence of which is:

"Fine. This much has been understood that if a person commits an act of treason against Allah Ta'ala then all his deeds should be cancelled and nullified. But if a person believes in Allah and he does not believe in Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) then what is the reason for his deeds being cancelled and him being declared a kafir?" Take it that there are also many such who consider themselves to be Muslim but do not consider rejection of Risalat to be kufr. They say, "Just tawhid is sufficient." Whereas in the Qur'an-e-Pak, which is the Kalam-e- Ilahi

(Word / Speech of Allah Ta'ala) several references have been made to our Nabi (Prophet) (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) being the Rasul of Allah Ta'ala. A clear statement is the following:

Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is the Rasul of Allah. S.48 a.29

When in the Kalam-e-Ilahi itself it has explicitly been stated that Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is a Rasul, what grounds are there for refutation? By its refutation it is necessary to conclude - we seek the protection of Allah Ta'ala! - that Allah Ta'ala is a liar and that Allah Ta'ala is not perfect in the attribute of Sidq (Honesty)! In actual fact "to believe in Allah Ta'ala" means that one has to believe that Allah Ta'ala is free and pure of all faults and deficiencies, and that He is considered to be the embodiment of all the cumulative and comprehensive Attributes (Sifat) of perfection. From among these Attributes is that of Sidq. If an individual does not have this belief then he will not be considered to believe in Allah Ta'ala, but to believe in his own fancies.

Thus, it has been proven that if a person rejects Risalat and does not believe in it, then he has committed treason against Allah Ta'ala, and it is obvious that whoever commits treason against Allah Ta'ala his punishment is everlasting.

12.THE STATUS OF AQA'ID & A'MAL (BELIEFS & DEEDS)

Some intellectuals of modern times have eliminated aqa'id - not at the theoretical level but at the practical level - from the circle of the notion of rectitude. They even consider themselves to have free choice in the matter. They feel that aqidah (sing.

of aqa'id) consists only of some thoughts and therefore fall into a category of non-essentials.

That leaves one with a'mal. They do consider them to be necessarily effective to some degree, but even then only some qualities are considered to be so. For example: mercy; self-sacrifice; compassion; assisting others; generosity and benevolence; love of one's people; etc. They have based the whole concept of being civilised and cultured on these few qualities. They consider portrayal of these qualities to be a very high degree of being civilised. They have therefore based a'mal on these few qualities and have put forward this criticism, "Take a person who respects and honours a buzurg (pious, saintly person), he believes Allah Ta'ala to be One, he is not even disrespectful with regard to the Rasuls, he is obedient to his parents, he has beautiful manners and politeness, he is shy and humble, he speaks softly and with humility, he is a good host, he keeps to his promises, as far as possible he tries to relieve the grief and suffering of others, he has good relations with his neighbours, and he is even merciful to the animals. In essence, he is a treasure of very good qualities. However, we fail to understand why, by the absence of just one issue, how can all his achievements be washed away? On the other hand is that person who does not bother about halal and haram (permissible and forbidden), who does not fulfil his fara'idh (compulsory duties), who does not perform his namaz (daily obligatory prayers), who does not keep his fasts, is of horrible manners and is an extremely perverse sinner - a fasiq and fajir - such a Muslim will live in Jannat forever. Even though he is punished but

eventually he will definitely enter Jannat. This we do not understand. This appears to be absolute bigotry and narrow-mindedness."

13.ANSWER TO THIS CRITICISM

This has been explained already but needs repetition.

Let me ask this critic the following: A person is exceptionally capable, he has acquired the highest qualifications, he is an engineer without peer, a craftsman par-excellance, a brilliant mathematician, a philosopher unrivalled, an outstanding historian, an unsurpassed commander of the armed forces, a matchless marksman, a scientific researcher and inventor, BUT he is guilty of committing treason, being neither prepared to accept the laws of the country nor prepared to submit to them. Everybody knows what punishment the judge will impose on this person. It is obvious that the law of the government will cause him to be exiled, executed or to be imprisoned for life. In fact, I take qasm (an oath) and say that nobody will ever have a waswasah (a fleeting doubt) with regard to this sentence of the judge and state that such a severe sentence is plain bigotry and contrary to fairness or contrary to being merciful. Everybody understands that treason is such a crime that the punishment should be severe, irrespective of the quantity or degree of the perpetrator's good qualities and achievements. Should any doubtful person have any waswasah with regard to the judge's pronouncement then it will be said, "The poor fellow! What can one do? He is simple-minded - an idiot."

Therefore, whatever waswasah apply to Allah Ta'ala should apply equally to the judge, but the indignant irony and contradiction is that at no time is there any

waswasah with regard to the judge's pronouncement but when Allah Ta'ala has made a pronouncement based on similar lines doubt is cast on it! That person who commits treason against the state and consequently all his deeds and good qualities become nullified and ignored and his punishment is permanent, all this is accepted completely and considered to be according to reason, whereas the punishment for that person committing treason against Allah Ta'ala one must place doubt on it? "Aji¬NmA! Nobody will object that a person who has been gambling, stealing, usurping trusts, assaulting others, raping - one who has been involved in such flagrant offences and has displayed the worst of worst behaviour, that he should be dealt with so leniently as to be sentenced for a period limited to a mere two to four years and thereafter be released! In comparison, that person who has several accomplishments, he is capable and honoured, generous, humble in nature, a man of his word, modest and soft-hearted, on his committing treason his punishment should be permanent? The poor fellow will never be released. He will spend his whole life in prison. He will now be permanently separated from his friends and acquaintances, from his mother and father, from his wife and children. Heavens, is this fair? On the one hand is that person of evil disposition and character, who is sentenced to a short-term punishment and, on the other hand, is that person of beautiful conduct and having the welfare of the creation at heart, who is punished for an indefinite period just on one issue! This apprehension, this doubt, has never occurred to anybody and it is unlikely to occur. Should any criticism arise and relayed to the judge, the judge will reply, "There is a difference between the two. The one, even though he is contravening the laws of the state, yet he accepts the rule of the lawgiver - the king. He does not commit treason. The other, from the

very outset, does not accept the state and desires to overthrow it. He does not accept the king."

My question is: Is this statement of the judge accepted or not? It is obvious that the answer is in the affirmative. The answer of the judge is according to reason and logic. So, it is astonishing that an answer that is issued from the lips of the judge sahib is accepted and if a similar answer is issued from the lips of the ulema-e-Islam it is not acceptable! And the latter are accused of harshness and bigotry!

It is difficult to understand. Is it a crime to be an alim, that whatever issues from his lips has to be rejected, no matter how correct he may be? And if the same statement issues from the lips of a modernist it should be accepted immediately? If a doctor says that drinking alcohol is harmful to one's health then one is prepared to stop drinking immediately. And if the same statement is made by a rىhani (rىh - soul) doctor, that drinking alcohol is harmful to one's rىhani health then no credibility is given to this statement!

In actual fact this poor alim sahib is not making this statement on his own behalf but he is making it under the instruction of that hakim (physician) of the body and the rىh, of mind and matter, leader of both the worlds, Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) and on the authority of the statement of Allah Ta'ala. In fact, the relevant statement of Bari Ta'ala is the following:

It is nothing else but that alcohol and gambling and idols and arrows of divination are the filthy works of Shaitan. S.5 a.90

It is astounding that this is the condition of Muslims and then they say, "We are mu'min (believers) and Muslim!" These types of persons are also present in abundance in this age. That is why I have presented examples. Otherwise there is no requirement or necessity for examples, for examples are there for clarification. In this instance there is no obscurity which necessitated the presentation of examples for the sake of clarification. So, the actual need that arose for these examples to be presented is that the attitudes of people have become so subverted that even in simple, plain issues they create suspicion and doubt. Issues may not be in the category of aqidah, but they definitely fall in the category of opinions. That is why the necessity was perceived to clarify by means of examples, because the basis of salvation in Islam is similar to the situation of obeying the state as a basis of his acceptance by the state. Such a person, even if he commits crimes, after he has served the sentences for his crimes, one day but one day he will be freed again. On the contrary, there is just no way in which the punishment will be terminated for that person who has committed treason against the state.

14.THE WEALTH OF ISLAM

After my aforementioned discussion, together with the examples cited, it has been adequately established that if there were any set of beliefs that are worthy of being taken to be the fundamental ideology of life and the bases of all actions then that can only be of Islam. There are no other sets of beliefs that are worthy of being made the fulcrum around which all a'mal (deeds) revolve.

Hence, the claim that I had made in the beginning: that if any concept can be given the highest eminence and priority, then it is only Islam. This has been clarified

adequately. Also, from this talk of mine, the virtue of Islam and its mandatory nature would also have been understood. Its absolute value would have been realised that the qabیliat (acceptance) of all that is fardh and wajib is based on having the correct aqidah of Islam and that neither any fardh nor any wajib can be performed without this basis.

15.THE STATUS OF FARDH RELATIVE TO NAFL

Nowadays people consider the nafl and mustahbat (non-obligatory) to have more virtues than the fardh (compulsory), so much so that those who are punctual with their nawafil and mustahbat are praised extensively even though they are not performing properly what is fardh. On the other hand, that person who is content in performing only what is fardh, wajib and sunnat-e-mu'akkidah, but does this beautifully and correctly, he is not valued and heeded and nobody praises him. People think, "What does he do? Nothing special." In actual fact the reality is just the opposite. The haqiqat (reality) is this: The virtues of what is fardh are more extensive than that of nawafil and mustahbat, and the thawab (reward) is also greater. As an illustrative example we can liken what is fardh to basic food and what is nawafil and mustahbat to condiments like chutney. It is obvious that basic food will have greater virtue, value and priority over the chutney. Merely consuming chutney without food is without gain, but food without chutney is not so. This theme has been narrated in a Hadith-e-Qudsi as follows:

Whosoever shows animosity to my wali (friend), I declare war upon him; and no bandah (bondsman) of mine can attain closeness to Me by means more beloved to Me than by virtue of such acts which I have made fardh on him; and My bandah

will continue to draw closer to Me by means of nawafil until I make him My beloved.

The noble muhaqqiqin fuqaha (jurists) and the sufiyan have also clarified it very nicely, that by means of fara'idh closeness to Allah Ta'ala is attained to a much greater extent than merely by nawafil. This is the status of the fara'idh. And our situation is this that we place greater importance on being punctual with the nawafil and mustahbat. So much so that we have seen that some people do not perform the fara'idh with as much enthusiasm and fervour as they do the nawafil. Then there are also those people who are performing the fara'idh, but have the deprecating thought, "We are doing nothing. We are only performing our fara'idh."

Now, if this thought presents itself out of a feeling of humility and lowliness then it is mahmىd (good and noble). However, if it arises because he considers nawafil and mustahbat to be superior to fara'idh, then this thought is reprehensible. The result of this is that the tawfiq (capacity) to make shukr (be thankful and show gratitude) on this ne'mat (blessing) is reduced.

Another point: With regard to that person who is involved in performing nawafil and mustahbat and performs his fara'idh only under duress, one finds that others become devoted to him and he himself becomes convinced of his own status! He now considers himself to be a shab-guzar (a pious person who stays awake at night in salat), even though he tends to shy away from the fara'idh - that is, his fara'idh consist merely of up and down movements and do not contain the serenity, etiquettes and correctness that they should be performed with.

The effect of this error is that people do not appreciate the value of such a great ne'mat (blessing) as Islam and a person will think, "What have I ever got? I have nothing!" In actual fact he has a very great treasure which the richest person in the world does not have, and that is the wealth of Islam and iman. If he has shortcomings in the other fara'idh then he will be sinful, and the effect will be that he will not enter immediately into Jannat, but only after some time. However, without Islam there is just no question of attaining salvation, not through any other means. And it is also just possible that some sinners may be forgiven and not be punished. This also will happen.

16.AUDACITY TO COMMIT CRIME

Upon this perhaps somebody may raise the following argument:

ARGUMENT

"Really? Do the Muslims believe that sin and disobedience can be forgiven without punishment? If this is so then the Muslims will develop the boldness and audacity to commit sin and be disobedient and, even after having committed the greatest of major crimes, they will still have hope of salvation."

ANSWER

The answer to this is as follows: If, for argument's sake, the consequence of the above belief is that one is motivated into committing crimes, then the result would be that these consequences will be evidenced to a greater extent in those who are closely connected to Islam, i.e. in the ulema (scholars), the ittiqiya and the sىfiya (the pious and saintly). These groups should manifest the consequences more and more. The reason is as follows: The general principle is that the effects of a

religion are manifested more among those people who are closely attached to the religion. Whereas we see - and the kuffar also bear testimony to the fact - that those people who have more knowledge about Islam and are more closely connected, never mind being involved in crimes, they refrain from getting involved even in doubtful deeds.

17.AN INCIDENT DEMONSTRATING TAQWA

This incident concerns a khalifah of our murshid (spiritual guide), Hakim-ul-Ummat Hadhrat Thanwi (r.a.):

Once, while travelling by train, he had with him luggage greater in weight than stipulated by the regulations. He had the funds to pay for the excess luggage but, because of the limited time before the train's departure, he could not see to the weighing of the luggage.

Arriving at his destination he related to the clerk at the station what had happened. He had the luggage weighed and requested the clerk to take the money for the excess. The clerk said that he had no time and told him to carry on and that there was no need to pay. However, this person replied, "You are not the owner of the railways. You are just an employee." (That is, as an employee he had no authority to cancel the payment. Only the owner could do this.) He kept on insisting on paying.

Finally, he went to the station master and related the whole story to him. The station master also told him, "Do not be concerned. You just carry on." However, this person was adamant on paying. The clerk, who had followed him to the office, and the station master started discussing the matter between themselves. Speaking

in English (thinking that this person would not understand), the one commented to the other, "This fellow appears to be drunk. Despite our refusing he insists on paying for the excess." This person was a saleh (virtuous) individual. He was also well versed in English and understood every word spoken by the two. He said, "I do not drink. But it is our religious instruction that one should not be negligent concerning the rights of others." Despite this the two railway officials refused to take payment.

He thought to himself, "What should I do now?" The idea occurred to him, "Let me buy a train ticket to the value of the excess luggage and then tear up the ticket. In this way I will have discharged the rights of the railways." This is what he eventually did.

Thereafter it came to be well known among the officials of the railway that those persons who are on their way to Thanah-Bhawan to be with Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib (r.a.) do not travel without first having their luggage weighed. Thereafter they used to weigh the luggage without any dilly-dallying.

This was the tremendous importance given to m'amalat (dealings) in the teachings of our Hadhrat Thanwi (r.a.). And huqیq-ul-ibad (rights of the creation) is also a form of m'amalat. Truthfully, can any nation portray the type of example shown in this incident?

To continue: If the aqidah mentioned previously were to have the effect of causing "boldness and audacity to commit sin and be disobedient" then the ulema and suleha would be the foremost in boldness and audacity. This is not the effect of the

aqidah, as the critics would have us believe. However, its effect is to cause abstention from sins and revulsion for sins.

But, alas! The condition of the critics is as follows:
"The gaze of my corrupted sight is lifted up, (by reason of which) his every achievement appears
flawed."

In other words, such a virtuous mas'alah (religious ruling) that cuts the very roots of crime, those with corrupted sight see it as an invitation to being audacious in committing crimes!

Besides this, even looking at it from the theoretical point of view, this aqidah can never be the basis for the perpetuation of crime. If such were the case, it would mean that Haq Ta'ala will forgive whomsoever he wishes despite that individual having committed major sins, whereas no person from amongst us knows whether Allah Ta'ala will deal with him in terms of favour and forgiveness or in terms of punishment because, basically, the Laws of the Shariah are the criteria. In this situation no individual can be unconcerned about being punished. To the contrary, every individual has the fear that he will be dealt with in accordance with the Laws.

AN EXAMPLE

The example of this is as follows:
A person is sexually impotent. Out of regret and shame he swallows some strychnine in an attempt to commit suicide. By chance he does not die, but the

strychnine gets digested into his system and makes him potent! (There are cases reported where this has happened.) However, the point is: because of this incidental and isolated occurrence will anybody suffering from impotence be rash enough to take strychnine? Never! In fact, every intelligent person knows that the specific effect of poison is to destroy. If, by chance, the specific effect of the poison is not seen, it does not mean that the poison has lost its specific quality. Therefore, neither will anybody give permission to others to swallow strychnine to improve his manliness and sexual drive nor will anybody be rash enough to do so himself.

In the same way everybody knows that the state or a ruler will grant an amnesty to a murderer as a royal favour. Despite this knowledge nobody will be rash enough to go around committing murder because it is known that the basic sentence for murder is execution by hanging and this sentence is carried out in practice as well, according to the laws of the country. On the other hand, royal favours and amnesty are not laws, but are dependent on the wishes of the ruler. It is not known with whom he will deal favourably and grant amnesty and with whom he will not. Therefore, trusting and depending on the probability of an amnesty can never be cited as being the basis for instigating people to commit crime.

In the very same way it is not a Law that sins will be forgiven without punishment - it is merely a Royal amnesty. How can anybody infer this to be the cause of incitement to sin?

ANOTHER EXAMPLE

If somebody were to pick up a clod of earth for istinja (cleansing oneself after answering the call of nature) and - by chance - the clod of earth turns out to be a gold nugget, so, should one now depend on this type of coincidental happening, discard trading and agriculture, and just sit back? Obviously the answer is in the negative. This being so, can anyone involved in major sins sit back complacently on the basis of someone being forgiven incidentally for having committed a major sin?

18.SPECIAL FORGIVENESS

Also, the person being forgiven for such a sin will be forgiven because of some pious deed of his, a deed that was exceptionally maqbﻯl (accepted) by Allah Ta'ala. Through its barkat (blessings) other sins are forgiven. And nobody even knows whether he has any such deed which is exceptionally maqbﻯl by Allah Ta'ala and through the barkat of which his other sins will be forgiven! Therefore, the attitude, "Commit whichever sins you want to. They will be forgiven without being punishment," - this degree of unconcern - can never be correct under any circumstances.

It is because of Allah Ta'ala's attributes of 'Afﻯ aur Karam (Forgiveness and Grace) that some sins may be forgiven without punishment. He is Rahim (Most Merciful) and Karim (Most Bounteous) to an unlimited extent towards His bondsmen. Upon hearing this, instead of becoming brazen enough to commit sins, the compulsion should be to increase one's obedience. This is because the greater the favours of one's Master the greater will be the indebtedness shown by that

person with sense and who is right- minded. He will progress further in the enthusiasm and fervour of his ta'at (obedience) and ibadat (worship). This effect is witnessed by those who have a greater connection with Islam and by companions of a king.

So now, based on this aqidah, if there develops an urge in anybody to be audacious and commit crimes, then it will be said that this is not the effect of the aqidah, but it is the effect of the person's innate perversity and depravity. This would be similar to the situation where a king is bountiful and the right-minded become more loyal as a result. However, some foolish people are brash enough to commit crimes, despite the king being so magnanimous. Will the evil actions of these people be attributed to the king's generosity or to their own malevolence? Obviously, the king will not be to blame.

19.DEFINITE FORGIVENESS

Be impartial. Put your intelligence to use. Where is His mercy; and where is our obstinacy!

Some people quote,

Do not despair of the Mercy of Allah Ta'ala. Verily, Allah Ta'ala will forgive all sins. Verily, He is Most Forgiving. S.39 a.53

This is Allah Ta'ala's statement. They maintain that from this it appears that Allah Ta'ala will definitely forgive all sins, because here -"whom He wishes" - does not appear.

However, these people should understand that the occasion of the revelation of this

ayet is in connection with those who had desired to discard kufr and accept Islam and had even done so. They had this apprehension, "In future we will refrain from sin. But what will our accountability be with regard to the enormous crimes we committed when we were sunk in kufr - we caused harm to the Sahaba (R.A.)and we caused a variety of torments to Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam)? If, after having accepted Islam, we are penalised for these then what is the benefit of having accepted Islam?"

It comes in the Hadith sharif that the kuffar presented themselves to Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) and said,
"If we accept Islam what will be the treatment meted out to us with regard to our previous sins?"

It was in answer to this query that the above ayet was revealed. There is a phrase that appears at the beginning of this ayet:

The meaning of this ayet will therefore be, "Those bondsmen of Mine who have made zulm (oppressed) on themselves... (Note that the past tense is used here.) ...should not despair of the Mercy of Allah Ta'ala. Verily, Allah Ta'ala will forgive all sins. Verily, He is Most Merciful."
Hence, the categorical promise of forgiveness that is contained in this ayet applies not generally but specifically to new Muslims.

20.CONDITIONAL FORGIVENESS

In another ayet there is the restrictive condition of Allah Ta'ala's Will (mashiyet) being applied to those who are disobedient after becoming Muslim and are

forgiven without being punished:

He forgives besides that whom He wills. S.4 a.116

And if it is said, (the general application of the word will be taken into account and the specific application will not apply) that, according to this rule, the ayet will be kept generalised and unrestricted, then I shall say that if one does not restrict it to the specific occasion of its revelation with this ayet then we will have to restrict it with another ayet, because it is compulsory to restrict one ayet with another ayet to bring uniformity in the situation. It is apparent that the above ayet and the one before are both with regard to sinners and those who are disobedient. In the one the forgiveness is restricted by the condition of Will (mashiyet), and in the other it is generalised. Therefore, what is generalised shall be subordinate to the restrictive. The one ayet concerns rules and Laws, whereas the other ayet concerns alleviation of the despondency of the despondent. This latter condition was that of the kuffar that, without being reassured, their despondency would not be alleviated. That is why it was told to them that they should not be worried. They should accept Islam. All sins committed in the state of kufr would be forgiven by their acceptance of Islam. The Hadith sharif states:

Islam annuls all sins committed before it.

Allah! Allah! How great and virtuous is not Islam! How magnificent is not the grandeur and exalted status of Islam! Despite the enormity of the crimes yet, when this good and beneficial task of accepting Islam has been performed, this nèki (good deed) has washed them all away! The cleansing has been such as if they are as pure as the day they emerged from their mothers' wombs. Subhanallah! (All

glory is to Allah Ta'ala!) What can one say about Allah Ta'ala's Mercy?
Verily, Allah Ta'ala's Mercy is close to those doing pious deeds. S.7 a.56

The nèki of accepting Islam has washed away all the rebelliousness of the years of kufr. How well has it not been stated:

Come back! Come back! In whatever condition you may be, come back,
Irrespective of whether you are a kafir, a fire-worshipper or an idol-worshipper!
Our court is not one of despair.
Even if your taubah has broken a hundred times, come back!

Do not despair - has the specific purpose of alleviating the despondency of the despondent. The root word qunىt (despondency) does not mean that it is not necessary to perform a'mal and that it is not necessary to take care and vigilance to save oneself from committing sins. However, qunىt itself provides proof that one has to perform a'mal. The word actually forbids despair, which is a result of sin. And raja (hope, which is the opposite of despair) cannot arise without good deeds. At the time that a criminal is aware of his criminality, at that particular moment the concept of raja (hope) cannot enter his mind. So, when it is wajib (compulsory) to abstain from qunىt (despondency) then it is also wajib to abstain from the means that bring on despondency, the reason being that the rule is that the antecedent to wajib also becomes wajib. An obstinate slave can never be blessed with the rank of raja (hope). Put it to the test.

I love to whisper to my beloved.
However, by reason of the repeated crimes by the tongue of the criminal, imploration also stops.

All praise is due to Allah Ta'ala! All criticisms have been satisfactorily rebutted. The replies have been provided as to why Islam is the only religion acceptable from the religions of Hadhrat isa, Mیsa and Dawیd (r.a.) and their disciples, or from any other religion; and why the basis of salvation rests only with Islam. Also explained is the reason why there is everlasting punishment awaiting those who do not accept Islam or who discard Islam after having accepted it. Also explained is why Muslims will attain salvation even though they may have committed sins, whether it be after being punished or without punishment.

21.THE EFFECTS OF REFUTING RISALAT

We now come to the second portion of Islam, that is Risalat - the acceptance of Hadhrat Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) as the Rasul (Messenger) of Allah Ta'ala. The answers to the doubts and criticisms levelled at Risalat will be related in some detail,(Allah Ta'ala willing), as well as some virtues of Islam, and I shall terminate my lecture thereon.

Listen carefully! There are some people who are such that they do not consider belief in Risalat to be necessary and consider themselves and others to be perfect mawahids (unitarians/ monotheists) without faith and conviction (i'tiqad) in Risalat. They do not consider the refutation of Risalat to be kufr.

Take this illustration: The ruling king sends his appointed viceroy to us. It has been confirmed (i) by reports, (ii) by deduction and (iii) by certain special qualities that he is somebody special from the Royalty and that this individual is his viceroy.

Now, if we do not accept him and we refute the fact that his statements to be that of the king, can anybody say that we accept the king and his rule?

So, (on the same bases) I am stating that (i) from clear-cut statements in the Qur'an sharif, there is proof of our Nabi (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) being the Rasul of Allah. Then Risalat is also verified on the basis of (ii) historical and biographical accounts and accounts given in various Divine Scriptures. Finally, (iii) the mu'jazat (miracles) are categorical proofs, as they are signs of Risalat.

Besides the above, there is a reply from an intellectual and imputative aspect as well and it is this: By not accepting Rasu (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) automatically it becomes compulsory that the person does not accept Allah Ta'ala! The reason is that belief in Allah Ta'ala and accepting Him means to believe in Him as He should be believed in. If someone has i'tiqad (faith and conviction) in any other manner then he has not believed in and accepted Allah Ta'ala.

Let me explain this by means of an illustration:
Somebody says, "I accept and believe in the ruling king." Someone else asks him, "And what is the king like?" He replies, "He is one- eyed. He has only one leg. Both his hands are cut off. He is mentally deficient. He is cowardly." In actual fact the king is just the opposite. He is very beautiful and handsome. He is an intelligent administrator. His speech is eloquent and endearing. He is brave and tolerant. He has no faults. He is blameless. Thus, can one say that that person really believes in and accepts the king? Obviously, the answer is: No!

So, to believe in Allah Ta'ala means that we should have strong faith and conviction in all His Attributes and Perfections. Among these is that of being Honest and Truthful. So, if a person does not consider Allah Ta'ala to be truthful and honest it means that he does not believe in and accept Allah Ta'ala. Now ponder carefully! Allah Ta'ala has stated in his Kalam (the Qur'an sharif): Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is the Rasul of Allah. S.48 a.29

Thus, whoever refutes the Risalat of Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) he has considered Allah Ta'ala to be a liar. And the refutation of the attribute of Sidq (Veracity / Honesty) is a refutation of Allah Ta'ala.

Hence, we have shown adequately that a person who does not believe in and accept Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) will be included among the mutineers and are kuffar and will be punished by everlasting punishment.

22.THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN IBADAT AND ITA'AT

The ita'at (obedience) of Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is the ita'at (obedience) of Allah Ta'ala. Ibadat (worship) is one thing and ita'at is another. Some do not understand the difference between the two and consider the ita'at of Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) to be contrary to tawhid. And this too, from those who consider themselves to be great intellectuals! - To Allah Ta'ala do we belong and to Him is our return! Is this intelligence that one does not know the difference between ibadat and ita'at and one still considers oneself to be an intellectual of deep understanding?

It is quite apparent that in ibadat there is no partner to Allah Ta'ala as far as Muslims are concerned. Even Huzur-e-Akram (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is not a partner in ibadat. This is the reason why it was not permissible to make sajdah (prostrate) to Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) in his lifetime and why it is not permissible to make sajdah at his grave.

Yes, in ita'at the ita'at of Huzur-e-Akram (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is the ita'at of Allah Ta'ala. The reason for this is not that Rasulullah
(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is a partner in ita'at, but the reason is that whatever Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) narrated was a message from Allah Ta'ala. Hence, the orders of Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) were, in reality, not his orders but by virtue of being a Rasul and a Messenger (Pegambar) they were Allah Ta'ala's orders through the tongue of the Rasul (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam).
It is naught save an inspiration that is inspired. S.53 a.4

There is also another statement of Allah Ta'ala:
Whoever has obeyed the Rasul he has indeed obeyed Allah Ta'ala. S.4 a.80

At another place it is stated:
Those who become bay'at (take a pledge) to you they verily are becoming bay'at to Allah Ta'ala. S.48 a10

The examples of this are those situations where the words of the wazir (the king's minister) are taken to be the words of the king; the viceroy is considered to be part of royalty; being obedient to the collector (regional administrator) is regarded as

being obedient to the king; and insulting the judge is equivalent to insulting the king. Despite this nobody will ever think that the wazir and the king now have the same status. If any ignorant person were to think this and in future he respectfully kisses the chair of the wazir instead of the royal throne definitely he will be earning the displeasure of the king. Another example: Your appointed legal representative will act on behalf of you, i.e. the representative's actions will reflect your wishes, that you have told him so. It does not mean that he is now your equal and that he is now the owner of your property, for him to utilise as he pleases!

So, the Muslim is obedient to Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) in this respect. At no time does it become compulsory that he is now equal or in partnership (to Allah Ta'ala).

Chapter No.:

13

........Continued From Part 12(A)

24. Basis Of Salvation

25. The Barkat Of The Kalimah Tayyibah

26. A Qissah Concerning Fir'oun

27. Another Qissah Concerning Fir'oun

28. The Elevated Status Of The Kalimah

29. The Anwar Of The Kalimah Tayyibah

23.BASIS OF SALVATION

What a shame that our adversaries raise criticisms whilst having absolutely no understanding of the realities of Islamic masa'il (rules). If they do understand, then the reason for their criticisms is pure hasd (jealousy). In actual fact nobody can ever level any valid criticisms against Islamic masa'il (rules).

From this discourse of mine the purity of tawhid should be as clear to you honoured folk as the clearness of the blazing day.

This topic that we were discussing was that the first fundamental item. And the first lesson is this that one should be Muslim and that one's death should also be as a Muslim.

Do not die except as Muslims. S.3 a.102

This has been demanded from us. That is why it was stated that all religions in conflict with the religion of Islam have been abrogated:

That person who desires and searches for another din (besides Islam), then (this other din and mazhab) will never be accepted from him. S.3 a.85

The status, the rank and the virtue of Islam are so elevated that salvation lies solely in Islam. Without Islam there is just absolutely no question of salvation.

24.THE BARKAT OF THE KALIMAH TAYYIBAH

The question now to be answered is: How do we attain salvation?

My dear friends! The means is: having the conviction of the Kalimah sharif in one's heart and to vocalise it with one's tongue. The Kalimah sharif is:

There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, (and) Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is the Rasul of Allah.

This will efface all kufr and it will connect one with Allah Ta'ala. This will cause the darkness of kufr to vanish and result in the light of iman to fill the heart.

This is that Pak (Pure) Kalimah which, at the time that the earth and the heavens were created, was given to one of the mala'ikah (angels), specially created for the task of reciting: "A -A î»aA à. That very malak (angel) is even now reciting the Kalimah in a loud voice and will continue to do so till the time of the blowing of the Horn (i.e. till the Day of Qiyamat).

If a mu'min recites this Kalimah with proper respect and honour four thousand of his sins get forgiven!

Upon viewing something that is amazing and wondrous one recites this Kalimah then for each and every letter of the Kalimah a verdant tree is created for him in Jannat. Each tree will have such an abundance of leaves as to equal the days in this world, and each leaf will be making tasbih (reciting the praises of Allah Ta'ala) and istigfar (seeking forgiveness) for the reciter of.... till the Day of Qiyamat.

25.A QISSAH CONCERNING FIR'OUN

A qissah comes to mind:

Allah Ta'ala ordered Hadhrat Musa (A.S.), together with Hadhrat Harun (A.S.): And (when the two of you go to Fir'oun) converse with him gently, that perchance he may (enthusiastically) accept your advice or that he may fear. S.20 a.44

In its commentary some mufassirin (commentators of the Qur'an sharif) have stated that Hadhrat Musa (A.S.) asked Allah Ta'ala, "Lord of the worlds! What is meant by 'conversing gently'?" The reply was, "You tell Fir'oun (on My behalf), 'Do you desire reconciliation? Just see - for four hundred and fifty years you were submerged in gratifying your nafs (carnal desires). So, now if you were to follow Our wishes for only one year then all your sins will be forgiven. And if you are unable to do this, then be obedient for only one month. And if you cannot do this then for even one day it is sufficient. And if you find even this to be distasteful then for one hour would be sufficient. If you are unable to do so for even this period, then just in one breath recite and there will be reconciliation between Myself and you.'"

When our Nabi Hadhrat Musa (A.S.) fulfilled the rights of his Risalat and made tabligh (propagated the Din) to Fir'oun then that rebellious and disobedient king,

instead of saying boasted:

I am your lord most high! S.79 a.24

Upon this the heavens and the earth trembled and requested from Allah Ta'ala permission to destroy him. Allah Ta'ala instructed, "He (Fir'oun) is like a dog. A little stick is sufficient for him. O Mىsa! Cast your staff on the ground." The moment Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) cast down his staff, immediately it changed into a serpent. Fir'oun was terrified.

It occurred to him that this is some charismatic effect of Hadhrat Mىsa's (A.S.) magic. Fir'oun thus arranged for his magicians to contest Hadhrat Musa(a.s.). The whole episode is quite famous. At the contest Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) threw his staff on the ground and it immediately turned into a serpent and swallowed up the magical tricks that the magicians had performed. Seeing this, all the magicians fell into sajdah (prostration) and recited:

bringing iman. Fir'oun, on the other hand, instead of bringing iman also, ran away into his palace. Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) followed him to the palace and called out, "O Fir'oun! If you do not come out of your palace I shall send my staff behind you and order it to get you!" Fir'oun heard this and called back, "O Mىsa! You should grant me some respite!" Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) replied, "I have no permission to grant you a respite." Upon this Allah Ta'ala sent wahi (revelation) to Hadhrat Musa(a.s.), "O Mىsa! Grant him respite. I have given him respite up to now. I am Halim (most forbearing). I am not hasty in meting out punishment." Fir'oun was given respite.

However, Fir'oun had such a fright that the effect of this dreadful experience caused his health to suffer, causing his to run to pass faeces forty times every day, which was not his habit formerly!

You have seen the grandeur of the bounty and sovereignty of Haq Ta'ala, that He was prepared to grant a decree of forgiveness to such a notorious rebel just on recital of the Kalimah ...

26.ANOTHER QISSAH CONCERNING FIR'OUN

There is another story about this same Fir'oun:

Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) said to Fir'oun, "Bring iman." Fir'oun responded, "If I bring iman what will I receive?" Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) said, "You will be granted the following four gifts: Firstly, you will remain alive till the Day of Qiyamat; secondly, this kingship (and empire) will remain yours till the day of Qiyamat; thirdly, you will remain in the prime of your life till the day of Qiyamat; and fourthly, you will remain in excellent health till the day of Qiyamat - you will not be afflicted with any illness." On hearing this Fir'oun said, "Very well. I will first make mashwarah (discuss it first)." Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) said, "Make mashwarah with whomsoever you like, but do not make mashwarah with your wazir, Haman."

Consequently Fir'oun went to make mashwarah with his wife Biwi Asiyah (R.A.). She exclaimed, "These four promises are great blessings! Every person is desirous of these very four bounties. You should definitely bring iman, and you should do so quickly! Remember: 'Time slipped by cannot be reclaimed.'"

Fir'oun got ready, but the rascal Haman got wind of it. He came running to Fir'oun.

Drawing his sword he placed it in front of Fir'oun and said, "I cannot bear it that up to the present the tongue with which Haman called you a god, should now call you a bondsman! First separate the neck of Haman with this sword - then you can do as you wish!" Fir'oun was swayed by this emotional outburst from Haman and consequently deprived himself of iman.

From these qissas it is apparent that from the side of Allah Ta'ala there was generosity and forgiveness, but from the side of Fir'oun the response was one of obstinacy - the rebel was not going to recite the Kalimah and he did not do so. The nett result was that he suffered the punishment, in this world, of being drowned in the sea and, in the hereafter, the punishment of being drowned in the painfully torturing flames of the fire of Jahannam.

27.THE ELEVATED STATUS OF THE KALIMAH

Allah Ta'ala has described the elevated status of the Kalimah in the following way: "The example of the Kalimah is like that of a tree - it is pure and clean (extremely pure and beautiful, bearing delicious fruit), its roots running deep and firm (that even though there may be gale-force winds and hurricanes it will remain firm in its place so that there is absolutely no question of it being affected by these). Its branches spread heavenwards, conversing with the skies. With the command of Allah Ta'ala it continuously produces fruit." S.14 a.24-25

This is the condition of the Kalimah Tayyibah. Whoever has embedded it in the heart with honesty and sincerity he will find that the root and the foundation is grounded in his heart. Then, whatever challenges and debates the kuffar present,

whatever doubts (waswasah) the Shayatin (pl. of Shaitan - Satan) instil and whatever nafsani (of the carnal self) imaginations and perplexities arise he will remain unshaken. Yes, if he commences to undermine the root himself by not irrigating it - by not carrying out good deeds (amilus- saliha) - then this deficiency will be the basis of wavering. This will be the final result. Otherwise the Kalimah Tayyibah has contained in itself splendid and delicious fruits.

This is the reason that the Kalimah Tayyibah has, at times, being likened to water: just as water cleanses and purifies the body and one's clothes of all dirt and filth, similarly the Kalimah Tayyibah cleanses and purifies one from the dirt and filth of sins.

At times the Kalimah Tayyibah is likened to the sun. The reason for this is that just as the sun lightens and emblazons the earth and the skies with its beams of light, in a similar manner this Kalimah Tayyibah emblazons the heart of its reciter and also spreads its light in the grave.

At times the Kalimah Tayyibah is likened to the stars. The reason is that just as the stars act as guides and means of navigation to the traveller, this Kalimah sharif also takes those who are lost in waywardness out of their darkness and places them on the common road of hidayet (spiritual rectitude).

At times the Kalimah Tayyibah is likened to a date tree. There are a number of reasons for this:

Firstly, that just as the date tree does not flourish on every piece of soil, in a like manner the Kalimah Tayyibah does not find a home in every heart.

Secondly, the date tree grows higher than other trees. Similarly, the root of the Kalimah Tayyibah is embedded in the hearts of the Muslims and its branches throws its shade below the Arsh (Throne of Allah Ta'ala).

Thirdly, it will be noted that the lower portion of the date tree is rough and thorny, while the upper portion is laden with fruit. Therefore, anyone wishing to climb the date tree will have to undergo some toil and difficulties initially, then only will he be able to lay his hands on the rich and delicious fruit. In a similar manner, in the early phases the reciter of this Kalimah has to endure some difficulties, some trials and tribulations, then he reaches the goal of his quest and the delicious 'fruit'. The greatest 'fruit' being the blessing of didar-e- ilahi (beholding the Vision of Allah Ta'ala).

This Kalimah Tayyibah is also the Key to the doors of Jannat. It is necessary for keys to have teeth and the 'teeth' of the Kalimah Tayyibah consist of abstaining from all those items that have been made haram (impermissible) by Allah Ta'ala and performing all those deeds that are wajib (compulsory) because Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) has said:
"That person who recites "A -A î»A à with conviction (aqidat) in his heart and with sincerity of intention (khalis-e-niyyet) shall definitely enter Jannat. Those who were present asked, "O Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam)! What is ikhlas?" Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) said, "To abstain from whatever Allah Ta'ala has made haram."

Nabi-e-Karim(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam)is also reported as saying, "O Abu Hurairah (R.A.)! Every nèki (good deed) will be weighed, but the Kalimah Shahadat will not be weighed for this reason that the reward for it will be unlimited!"

28.THE ANWAR OF THE KALIMAH TAYYIBAH

Hadhrat Ibn 'Ata (r.a.) has stated that the zakir (reciter) of the Kalimah Tayyibah attains three anwar (plural of nیr - light/ effulgence/ radiance) - (1) nیr-e-hidayet (light of guidance), (2) nیr-e- kifayet (light of sufficiency) and (3) nیr-e-'anayet (light of favour).

(1) Through the blessing of nیr-e-hidayet the darkness and gloom of shirk (polytheism) is eliminated.

(2) That person on whom the bounty of nیr-e-kifayet settles is saved from all types of major sins and obscenities.

(3) That person blessed with nیr-e-'anayet is secure from all corruptive thoughts and from those activities that the neglectful are involved in.

(1) Those blessed with the first type of nیr are those making zikr (reciting) of the Kalimah Tayyibah with their tongues (zikr-e-lisani). However their hearts are not attentive and are not affected.

(2) The second category of nیr is for those whose hearts are present and attentive, who are blessed with zikr-e-qalb (remembering in the heart).

(3) The third category of nیr is the portion of those who do not forget their Rabb for even a moment.

There is an indication towards this in the following ayet:

And there are some from amongst them who oppress their own souls; and there are some who are of an average level; and some from amongst them are such that with the taufiq of Allah Ta'ala, continue to progress in doing good deeds (nèkies). S.35 .a.32.

Allah Ta'ala has stated:

Keep yourself busy in My remembrance (and) I shall remember you. S.2. a.152.

O Muslims! Ponder! The basis of all our evil is not remembering Allah Ta'ala. See, Allah Ta'ala states that we should remember Him and He will remember us. Yet, we prefer to remain far, far away. The mu'azzin calls out "Come to namaz!" but we rush towards the bazars and the pavilions! The mu'azzin again calls out, "Come to success!" and we rush towards mischief.

ah! Somebody has said, very appropriately,

We are calling you - yet you flee from Us;

Ungrateful you have become - (do you think that you) are you out of Our sight?

Wherever you go, there We will be, O ignorant one!

Flee as you wish - but how will you conceal yourself from Us?

29.BARAKAT (BLESSINGS) OF ZIKR-E-ILAHI

The majlis (gathering) of zikr-e-ilahi is that special gathering best explained in the words of Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam): At times a bandah (bondsman) comes to the gatherings of zikr-e-ilahi burdened with countless sins. However, when he departs from that mubarak majlis he leaves clean and pure, due to the

barkat of that majlis, so that he is now not accountable for any of those sins. This is why Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) has stated that the majlis of zikr is an extremely pleasurable and lush garden of the burgeoning and verdant gardens of Jannat.

Hadhrat Bayizid Bustami (r.a.) has stated, "Anyone who remains in zikr-e-ilahi remains in the shade of 'Shajarah-Tیba'." ['Shajarah Tیba' is the name of a tree in Paradise, yielding extremely delicious fruit.]

Hadhrat Abu Darda (R.A.) has narrated that Janab Rasulullah Akram (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) has stated: On the Day of Qiyamat such people will be raised form their graves that their faces will be brilliantly radiant with nیr and they will be seated on mimbars (platforms) of glittering pearls. They will neither be Ambiya (Prophets) nor martyrs, but will be another category of people. A Bedouin, on hearing this, sat "do-zanی" [a respectful manner of sitting, as when one sits in "tashahhud"], and asked, "O Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam)! Who are these people? Kindly state to us clearly." Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) said, "These are those who had affection for one another solely for Allah and gazed at one another with love and respect and gathered amongst themselves to make zikr-e-Ilahi . These people are not from one place or one neighbourhood, but they are from various tribes, from numerous towns and varying villages."

It is a great shame that this is that age that, instead of muhabbat (love and affection) and accord, there is animosity; instead of looking at others with respect, one looks upon the other with eyes of disdain and contempt. Also, instead of there

being zikr-e-ilahi (remembrance of Allah Ta'ala) in peoples' hearts, there is gaflat-e-ilahi (negligence of Allah Ta'ala).

Another virtue is that Allah Ta'ala will establish the zakir in Jannat-e- Darul-Jalal (Place of Splendour in Paradise). Allah Ta'ala has emblazoned this with His own Name:

Blest be the name of thine Lord, Owner Of Majesty and Beneficence! S.55 a.78

30.SUBTLE POINTS OF THE KALIMAH

There are untold amazing and fascinating subtleties in this Kalimah.

One is that this Kalimah, in its pronunciation, is confined to the oral cavity. It has no affiliation with the lips. This is an intimation that it is connected to that pure cavity - i.e. the heart.

Secondly, all its letters (in Arabic) have no dots. In this is the intimation that one should have no association with anybody else. In making His zikr one should cut off all thoughts connected with anything else that is not Allah Ta'ala. The heart should be cleansed from the grasp and affiliation of all else besides Allah Ta'ala.

Thirdly: A year consists of twelve months. This Kalimah also has twelve letters (in Arabic). This covertly implies that whosoever recites this Kalimah with heartfelt conviction will have one year's sins forgiven.

Fourthly: A full night and day has twenty four hours. This Kalimah, if combined with Muhammad Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) contains twenty-four letters (in Arabic). This intimates in the direction that that person who recites this

Kalimah once during the day and night, then each letter will be a kaffarah (atonement) for the sins of each and every hour of the day and night.

Fifthly: The Kalimah has seven words in it. Jahannam also has seven doors. In this is the intimation that each of the seven doors close by the reciter reciting each of the seven words.

31.AN INCIDENT: THE PILGRIM & THE PEBBLES

At this point an incident comes to mind:

It is written in the kitab (book)"Al-Haqa'iq" that a certain person stopped at Arafat and then made his way to Muzdalifah and then to Mina. [These are places near Makkah. Pilgrims follow this route at the time of Haj.] Having collected his pebbles, he cast them at the Jamarat. As he cast the pebbles, he addressed them, "O Pebbles! Bear witness! With a sincere heart I am reciting:

Saying this he cast the pebbles. That night this person had a dream. In the dream he saw that it was the Day of Qiyamat (Resurrection). The Throne of Justice of Allah Ta'ala had been set in position. Accounting of deeds was taking place. A'mal (deeds) were being weighed. His turn also came. His sins outweighed his good deeds, resulting in the order being given that he be sent to Jahannam. The mala'ikah were dragging him towards Jahannam. When this person reached the doors of Jahannam he saw those very pebbles taking up positions in front of the door. They prevented him from entering. The warder at the door of Jahannam tried to remove them, but he was unsuccessful. After repeated attempts, when he and the other mala'ikah failed to remove the pebbles, this person was brought back to under the Arsh (Throne). Following closely behind him were the pebbles,

hastening to intercede for him. Their intercession was accepted and the order was given for this person to be entered into Jannat.

These are the virtues of the Kalimah sharif which have been narrated:

32.THE KALIMAH & FORGIVENESS: A FEW INCIDENTS

There was a person, from the Bani Isra'il, who was involved in disobeying his Rabb for four hundred and eighty years. One day muhabbat-e-ilahi (passionate love of Allah Ta'ala) welled up in his heart and he came to Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) and recited,

Just then the angel Hadhrat Jibril (A.S.) descended and said, "O Musa! Allah Ta'ala has forgiven his sins of four hundred and eighty years!"

Is there any wonder, then, that Allah Ta'ala will also forgive the sins of a faithful bondsman (imandar bandah) by him reciting:

It is stated in the Hadith sharif that the moment the bandah recites

an angel takes it upwards to the heavens and an angel from the heavens descends to receive it. The angel descending from above asks the first one, "From where have you come?" This one responds by asking, "Where are you going to? I am taking the shahadat (witness) of such-and-such person's Kalimah Tawhid to his Rabb." Hearing this, the other angel says, "I am descending for this reason that I may convey to him the good news of salvation from the punishment of Jahannam."

Hadhrat Imam, Hujjatul Islam, Abی Hamid Gazzali (r.a.) narrates that somebody saw Zubaidah in a dream. He asked her, "How did Allah Ta'ala treat you?" She replied, "O Son! Allah Ta'ala forgave me on account of four Kalimas: The first

Kalimah was: There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah - I am annihilating my whole life for it; the second Kalimah was: - There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah - I will enter into the grave with it; the third Kalimah was: - There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah -I will pass my solitude (in the grave) with it; and the fourth Kalimah was: - There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah- I will meet my Rabb with it."

Hadhrat Ali (R.A.) was passing by a particular cemetery. He stood there and called out in a loud voice:

Peace be upon you, O dwellers of the graves! How have you found "A -A î»aA à? (I.e. What did you reap by virtue of this Kalimah?)" A voice replied, "Through this sacred Kalimah we have found salvation from every form of destruction and calamity."

Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Abbas (R.A.) has narrated, "The meaning of is this that there is nobody who can bring benefit or cause harm except Allah Ta'ala. Besides Him nobody can cause disgrace and nobody can give respect. Besides Him there is no one who can give and there is no one who can withhold."

There is another narration by Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Abbas (R.A.) that under the Arsh (Throne of Allah Ta'ala) is a Caller who calls out, "O Jannat! You and your everlasting blessings - for who are these?" The reply comes forth, "I have been prepared for the reciters of.. and I am haram for those who reject, Jahannam says, "That person will reside in me who rejects the Kalimah."

33.TAWHID-E- KHALIS - PURE TAWHID

The reciters of the Kalimah have four states:

The illustration is that of a shell, the skin, the kernel and the extract of the kernel. Take an almond: firstly, it has a shell; secondly, there is a thin skin; thirdly is the almond itself; and, fourthly, is its oil - the oil being the essence. However, obtaining the oil is dependent on the almond kernel being succulent, which is dependent on the integrity of the skin, which, in turn, is dependent on the integrity of the shell. In other words, each is dependent on the other for its existence and survival. Take a mango: just the skin without the kernel and the juice, is useless. The juice, in turn, cannot remain intact without the protective skin.

Applying this to the Kalimah: Merely to recite with the tongue and the heart to be completely heedless is like having a mere shell, as in the illustration above. This was the situation with regard to the tawhid of the munafiqin (the hypocrites in the age of Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam), that it benefited them as long as they remained in the world in that they were dealt with in the same (generous) manner as the mu'minin and they benefited from them. However, when the munafiqin leave this world they are cast in the blazing fire of Jahannam.

The tawhid of the mu'min is like the kernel of the almond, in that the kernel contains a variety of waste products also. So, the mu'min is also not free of inclining towards worldly display. The essence of the almond is its oil, which is not contaminated with anything else. This is the quality of the pure tawhid of the arif-billah [a person with Gnosis of Allah Ta'ala - a very high spiritual stage]. It is free of everything besides Allah Ta'ala; it is safe from riya and sam'ah (show/

ostentation). His vision can accommodate nothing except Allah Ta'ala. His eyes sees nothing except Allah Ta'ala.

A poet has quite aptly stated:
"By reason of my seeing my Friend, I am oblivious of my life;
and, by reason of the remembrance (zikr) of my Friend, I am oblivious of the universe!"

34.THE IMPORTANCE OF THE KALIMAH

Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (r.a.) was in the throes of death. The talqin (repetition) of... was made in his presence. He responded by saying, "What, do you think that I have forgotten my Allah Ta'ala that I should be reminded of Him now?" What he is saying is that He is in his heart all the time.

35.A QISSAH: THE PRINCESS & HER FATHER

There is another qissah of Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (r.a.). He states:
"Once, I left home with the intention of performing Haj (the Pilgrimage to Makkah). The camel I was riding turned its direction towards Constantinople. I tried very hard to stop it from proceeding in this direction and get it to turn back in the direction of Makkah, all to no avail - it persisted in going in the direction of Constantinople [modern day Istanbul - Tr.]. When it repeatedly turned in this direction, I left it to proceed on its own.

"We finally reached Constantinople. When we entered the city we found the inhabitants very agitated. Very much perplexed at this state of the people, I enquired as to the reason for this. I was informed that the king's daughter had

become insane and the people, rushing about here and there, were in search of a physician. I told the people, 'I will undertake her treatment immediately. Take me to her.'

"When I reached the place where she was kept, the princess called out to me from inside, 'O Junaid! Although you tried to turn your camel away from my direction, but just see how my jazbah (brimming enthusiasm) forcefully drew you to me!'

"When my gaze fell on her I saw that the princess was laden with a heavy iron yoke around her neck and that her feet were bound in chains. She addressed me again, saying, 'O Junaid! Prescribe some medicine for my ailment!'
"I told her, 'Recite... The moment she recited the Kalimah the iron yoke on her neck and the chains on her feet split asunder and fell to the ground and she immediately became well.

The princess's father, the king, saw this amazing recovery and remarked, 'You appear to be an excellent physician! Prescribe some medication for me as well.'

"I said, 'You also recite this Kalimah.'
"The king also recited the kalimah and became a Muslim. With him many others also became Muslim."

Respected friends! This Kalimah enjoys such a high status that Allah Ta'ala has prescribed for His bandas (bondsmen) all acts of worship and all obedience - in fact, the whole of the Shariat - for the purpose of embedding and maintaining it. This Kalimah is the means for attaining Ma'rifat-e-ilahi (Gnosis of Allah Ta'ala), through worship and obedience. Whether the wird (repetitive recitation) of this

Kalimah is done in the inner recesses of the heart, or whether done by a person who is an arif-billah, having tasted the delight of the affection and the ma'rifat of the Exalted Creator, he will be blessed with the enrapturing delight of both life and death.

"If the enrapture of the one who has a passion for death were to be narrated,
Even (Hadhrat) Isa and (Hadhrat) Khidr (r.a.) would yearn for death!"

36.ANOTHER QISSAH:

Hadhrat Khawas (r.a.) relates an episode:

"The thought crossed my heart that I should visit the city of Rome. I consulted with my heart and put forward that it would be better to make one's way to Baitul Muqaddas or Madina Tayyibah, but my heart would not accept this. Even though I patiently explained the benefits of these options to my heart time and again, my heart would not accept my alternate suggestions. The final outcome was that I made a firm resolve to visit Rome.

"When I reached Rome I found the inhabitants gathered at one place. It appeared as if they were caught up in some great difficulty, some alarming problem. It turned out that some girl had become insane and the girl in question was the king's daughter. I promised to undertake her treatment.

The people enquired, 'Are you a physician?'

"I replied, 'I am not a physician but I am the slave of a Physician.'

"The inhabitants took me to the king, who took me to his daughter. The moment the princess set her eyes on me she said, 'O Khawas! That very Physician Whose

slave you claim to be, is the very One Who has thrown me into "insanity"! Listen! The commencement of this "illness" of mine was as follows: One night I was immersed in my comforts and pleasures when, suddenly, Jazb-e-ilahi (passionate love of Allah Ta'ala) created an unusual emotion in my heart, a pulling and drawing force, that drew me to His qurb-e-khas (special and unique closeness.) Zikr-e-ilahi automatically came to my lips uninterruptedly. I turned my back on the world (dunya). I heard an extremely melodious voice, one that was most alluring, telling me

- Say, He is Allah, the One; and Ahmed is (His) Messenger."

"I told the princess, 'Do you not desire for the tranquillity of our Islamic country?'

"She replied, 'Goodness, Khawas! What will I go and do there?'

"I said, 'There are situated the blessed places of Baitul Muqaddas, Makkah Mukarramah and Madinah Munawwarah.'

"She remarked, 'Is that so? Just lift your head and look up.'

"When I lifted my face heavenwards what did I see? The Khanah Kabah, Madinah Tayyibah and Baitul Muqaddas were circling above my head!

"The princess then continued, 'O Khawas! That person who traverses this Path with the heart, the Kabah Mu'azzamah itself comes to circumbulate that person.' Thereafter, the princess addressed me in a passionate and ecstatic voice, 'O Khawas! The time to meet my Friend is near!'

"I said, 'Death in a city of kufr? How can that be?'

"She said, 'What harm is there in it? Flesh and bones will be in the city of Rome; the ruh (soul) will be by the side of Janab-e- ilahi! (Allah Ta'ala).' Saying this, she

let out an ecstatic cry and she departed from this world. At that moment a Voice was heard:

"O Soul that has attained tranquillity! Proceed towards your Nourisher (Rabb), in the manner that
you are pleased with Him and He is pleased with you!" S.89 a.27-28

37.THE FOCUS OF NAZAR-E-ILAHI (ALLAH'S GAZE)

Gaflat (negligence) is an evil thing. Huzیr-e-Akram (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam)has stated:
Keep your tongue constantly moist with the zikr of Allah Ta'ala.

All one's work - dini or dunyawi (religious or worldly) - is accomplished with this. Ponder over its meaning and remove from the heart the love of everything besides Allah Ta'ala. This is the reason for the creation of the bandah (bondsman).
Make the zikr of Allah Ta'ala in abundance that you may attain success. S.8 a.45
They make the zikr of Allah Ta'ala while standing, sitting or lying down. S.5 a.103

Zikr-e-ilahi has been eulogised. Jama' khawatir (concentration) is an order given to us. The method of attaining this state is the repetitive recitation (wird) of Kalimah Tayyibah, performed with heartfelt enthusiasm. That Being is extremely Merciful and Bounteous, but sincerity is essential. This means that one should be obedient to Allah Ta'ala solely with the understanding that this is the right and the order of Allah Ta'ala, and one should have no other motive.

If one ponders on the fact that none of the creation will accept anything when the contributor has a corrupt intention and contaminates his intention with impurities,

then what can one say about that Great Being whose Name is "Latif" (One Who is Most Sublime) and "Quddىs" (One Who is Most Sacred)? Even though our obedience may not be absolutely clear and sincere, then too He favours us with His Attributes of "Rahim" (One Who is Most Merciful) and "Rahman" (One Who is Most Benevolent).

Neither does the blood nor flesh (of the sacrificial animal)reach Allah Ta'ala, but your taqwa (i.e. your sincerity) reaches Him. S.22 a 37.

A Hadith sharif states:
Allah Ta'ala does not look at your form - He looks at your hearts and your a'mal (deeds).

Ponder! That aspect which the creation looks at, i.e. your appearance, can be cleansed with soap and made pretty with the application of make-up. Whereas the heart, which is the focus of Nazar-e-ilahi (the focus of Allah Ta'ala's attention) is brimming with the filth of association with gair (others besides Allah Ta'ala) and the excreta of pride, jealousy and show. It is appropriate to apply the following couplet to this state of affairs:
From the outside, the graves of the kuffar appear beautifully adorned;
But, were one to peep inside, one would see it filled with the Wrath of Azz-o-Jal (Allah Ta'ala).

38.AN INCIDENT: THE PRIEST AND THE CROSS

I am reminded of an incident concerning a Christian priest:
The priest was the head of all the other priests. He stayed in the church. Whenever

he had to leave the church, he used to face the crucifix and leave. He never turned his face away from the crucifix.

His son once undertook a journey by sea during a season of storms and hurricanes. The priest was most uneasy. All the time he anxiously awaited news of his son's well-being. Suddenly the news reached him that his son had arrived home safe and sound. In his unbounded love he left the church to go and meet him, but he forgot his normal habit of not turning his face away from the crucifix. (In his haste to meet his son) he turned his back to the crucifix. After meeting his son he remembered his disloyalty to the crucifix.

Immediately he returned and confessed to the other priests of his negligence. They declared that the punishment for this was that he should be lashed a hundred times. The lashing started, halting only when the full hundred lashes were meted out.

The people thought that the priest's attitude to the crucifix would now have changed to one of anger because of the severity of the lashing. However, instead of the whipping having a negative effect and stopping him from the worship of the crucifix, the priest got hold of a knife and cut off his feet at the ankles and said, "This is the punishment for one who turns his face away from his lord and turns his back to him!"

If this is the attitude of the wayward people of batil (falsehood) on showing disloyalty to batil then what should the state of the people of Haq (Truth) be when they are negligent of the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala and turn their backs away?

39.ANOTHER INCIDENT: A GIFT FOR A PIOUS PERSON

In the same vein is another incident:

A certain person brought some cloth as a gift for a pious person and presented it to him, saying, "This is for you to wear."

The pious person said, "I will not accept it. I shall not wear it."

When the other person insisted on giving him the cloth, the pious person made it known to him the intention with which he was giving the gift. He said, "I only wear those clothes that have been presented purely for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. This cloth does not fall into that category."

The person had presented the cloth with the intention that Allah Ta'ala should fulfil his wishes through the barkat (blessings) of giving the cloth to the pious person. The latter had got wind of his intention.

If this is the situation with the creation, that an item is refused because it was given for gairullah (for motives other than the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala), then what can one say about that Being, Haq Subhanahu-wa-Ta'ala, Knower of the Unseen? Even if one Kalimah were to issue from one's lips with complete sincerity, from where to where will that person not journey?

40.THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "SANAM" & "SAMAD"

There is this story of an old man living in a city in Hindustan. The best part of his life he had spent in worshipping an idol. It so happened that he faced an extremely important task for which he pleaded for assistance from his idol. Hours on end he rubbed his nose in obeisance in front of it; he implored it for help; he cried in front

of it; he even presented it with sacrificial offerings; he reminded his idol, "O Sanam (idol)! For a long time have I worshipped you. I have even offered you sacrifices. I have left no stone unturned in my worship of you. Have pity on my condition! Look at my sorry state..!" But no sound came from the lifeless piece of rock fashioned into an idol. Repeating, "O Sanam! O Sanam!" he finally became exhausted.

The thought then occurred to him, "Very well. I should rather call on that One, that very One Who the Muslims consider to be Absolute." With this thought in mind he reflected on his past life and became remorseful about his lifetime of negligence and foolishness. He now called out, "O the Absolute Khuda! Please accept my supplication!" That is: "O Samad! Come to my assistance!"

A Voice was heard,

"O My bondsman! I am at your service! Ask! What is it that you desire?"

The mala'ikah, on witnessing this, spoke up, "O our Allah! We are amazed that, on the one hand, he called on the idol for ages and received no reply yet, on the other hand, he called on You just once and You responded by saying, 'Labbaik!'(I am at your service)."

Allah Ta'ala said, "O My mala'ikah! When he called on his 'Sanam' and received no reply, he became despondent and turned away to call on 'Samad' - if he received no reply from Me as well then what difference would there be between Me and that lifeless idol? Whereas there should be a vast difference between 'Sanam' and 'Samad!'"

Chapter No.:

14

.......Continued From Part 12(B)

41.SACRIFICES FOR IMAN

There were those who understood the reality of the Kalimah. They took delight in it, became inflamed with it. They gave up everything, even their lives, for it. They had swords cut their bodies - they submitted. Wild animals devoured them - they accepted. They were drowned in the rivers - they submitted. Fish swallowed them - they did not breathe a word about it. They were executed - they remained pleased. They were expelled from their towns; they were forced to leave their wives and children; their houses were confiscated; their properties were snatched away; their were reduced to poverty - in other words, every conceivable act of tyranny was inflicted on them, but they adopted tafwiz-e-kamil (placing their trust completely in Allah Ta'ala). They were hurled into a fire - they showed perfect forbearance (sabr-e-tam).

[These are references to the tortures inflicted on the reciters of the Kalimah and the sacrifices they had to bear - Tr.]

42.A QISSAH: A BELIEVER IS THROWN INTO A CAULDRON OF OIL

Those who brought iman on Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) and recited.....

were punished harshly by Fir'oun. He went to this length that he took a large cauldron, filled it with oil, placed it on a huge fire and hurled one who had brought iman into the boiling oil. Hadhrat Jibril (a.s.) immediately took him out. Fir'oun

hurled him in again. Hadhrat Jibril (a.s.) lifted him out again. Three times this happened.

Finally, this person, intoxicated with iman, turned to Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) and said, "Janab! Please make du'a (supplicate) to Allah Ta'ala that He should not take me out of the cauldron. For me it is much better that I sacrifice my life for Islam on this Kalimah than undergo this difficulty." Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) made du'a on his behalf. Fir'oun again hurled him into the cauldron.

This time this sinless ashiq (lover) of Allah Ta'ala was scalded by the oil into a formless piece of charcoal. Hadhrat Jibril (a.s.) came to Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) and said, "O Musa! Allah Ta'ala has also increased your reward and blessed him also with an excellent reward! At the time all the doors of Jannat were opened for his rی h to enter!"

O Muslims! When this is the reward for those who recited the Kalimah Musa, then imagine what the reward will be for the reciters of the Kalimah Muhammadi(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam).

Be a shaidai (lover) as well as a fidai (devotee). From your appearances let it be apparent whose ashiq you are and become a complete example of:

Verily, in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example... S.33 a.21

43.THE STEADFASTNESS OF THE ASH AB-E-KHAHF

There came a time when the King Diqyanیs ruled over the Christians of Rome. This was a period far removed from the time of Hadhrat isa (a.s.). This king was cunning, arrogant and oppressive beyond limits. He turned away from his religion

and compelled the populace into idol-worship. He ordered that sacrifices be offered to the idols and said, "Whoever does not do so will have to pay with his life!" He did not stop at a mere announcement but went to each and every city, compelling thousands into idol-worship and putting to the sword countless others. He finally reached the city where the Ashab-e-Khahf (Companions of the Cave) resided. The name of this city was Yafsیs.

On his arrival, those who wished to save their iman, started fleeing from the city. The king sent his soldiers after them and had them brought to him. Those who refused to submit to him were put to the sword. Others decided to submit to him.

A few youths, who have become famous as the Ashab-e- Khahf, were blessed by Allah Ta'ala with iman and with the qualities of sabr (forbearance), tawakkul (trust in Allah Ta'ala) and zuhd (asceticism). They had attained the state of wilayet (sainthood). When they were told by the king to turn to idol-worship they utilised the quality of perseverence which, by the taufiq of Allah Ta'ala, had been instilled in them. The eldest among them, Hadhrat Maksalmina, gave the reply, "We are not going to give up the worship of the True Deity, the Master of the heavens and the earth, for the worship of anything else. Do with us what you wish. Do not place your hopes in us becoming a party to kufr and shirk." His companions also supported him fully in this and showed unanimity with their tawhid.
Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (R.A.) states, "I know their names (i.e. of the Ashab-e-Khahf). They were seven persons: Tamlikha, Maksalmina, Martینash, Tinینas, Siyarminینas, Zیtawas, and Kashfitnینas. The eighth was a dog whose name was Qitmir."

When the king saw the boldness of the seven he had their clothes removed and said, "I feel pity for your youth and your beauty. I, therefore, grant you a few days' reprieve, so that you can get some sense and think over your decision." Saying this, King Diqyanوs set off for another city.

The persecuted youths discussed among themselves as to what they should do and agreed on a plan to leave the city and hide in a cave. Consequently each went home, collected some money and departed for a nearby mountain, Jabal-e-Yanjulوs, where they hid in a large cave. Once there they fell into sajdah (prostration), lamenting in front of Haq Ta'ala. In order to alleviate their discomfort Allah Ta'ala spread over them a heavy mantle of sleep and they all fell asleep instantly.

Back in the city: King Diqyanوs returned and searched everywhere for the youths but found no trace of them. He then prepared an epistle detailing everything about the youths - their names, their parentage, their ages, their addresses, their ages, their features and also the date. Having noted down all this he placed the epistle in his treasury.

The youths slept in the cave for a full three hundred years. Their dog, which had accompanied them, also slept all this time on the threshold of the cave. They also slept in a remarkable manner: the sun's rays did not affect them and the rain did not fall on them, yet they had sufficient ventilation. While asleep they were even made to change positions so that the earth would not affect them. Their eyes were somewhat open, somewhat closed, and their breathing was even, so that it did not

appear as if they were sleeping, in case even if any passerby were to see them he would think that they were awake and not trouble them. In fact, Allah Ta'ala had made complete arrangements for their comfort and safety. It is indeed true: Whoever becomes Allah's, Allah Ta'ala becomes his.

Three centuries went by. During this time several kings occupied the throne in Rome and passed on. Simultaneously, vast and amazing changes occurred in the customs and lifestyles of the people. At the end of this period a pious Christian king, Baidrىs, ascended the throne and ruled over the kingdom. He called his people towards iman. However, an epoch had passed in the populace being steeped in corruption and, consequently, just as many brought iman; similarly many would not hearken and rejected the concept of being resurrected on the day of Qiyamat. Finally, the king made a du'a: "Bar-ilahi! (O Allah!) Manifest such a sign whereby a person will be resurrected a second time after dying, in order that those who consider it impossible can witness the event themselves."

This du'a of his was accepted, and the Ashab-e-Khahf were awakened. At the time that they had fallen asleep it had been close to sunset, and the time that they woke up was more or less the same time of the day. That is why, when they estimated the duration of their sleep, they said,
They said, "We have tarried a day, or part of a day." S.18 a.19

Now, on the one hand, they were feeling hungry; on the other hand they were worried as to - Allah Ta'ala knows! - what the consequences were of King Diqyanىs returning and searching for them. That is why Hadhrat Tamlikha, who

had custody of all their money, was sent into the city. Safeguarding himself, his task was to enter the city inconspicuously, make enquiries, buy some food that had not been sacrificed in the name of idols and make sure that he did not give away their whereabouts.

Hadhrat Tamlikha, taking with him the coins of the Diqyanىsy dynasty, entered the gates of the city to find that neither was it the same city, nor was the bazar the same, nor were the people the same, nor was the society the same! There was once an age when nobody could even take the name of Hadhrat Sayidina Hadhrat isa (a.s.). But now he saw the majority of the people performing namaz and appearing outwardly to be pious. In utter amazement he studied the faces of the people, but failed to recognise anybody. Finally, thinking that he had forgotten his way and landed up somewhere else, he asked somebody the name of the city. He was given the name of the very city. His amazement increased to a level of perplexity. He entered a shop to buy some food items and took out his coins. When the locals saw these Diqyanىsy coins, they, in turn, became amazed and thought that some hidden treasure had been uncovered. The word spread and, in the course of time, reached the king's palace.

King Baidrىs summoned the whole group and questioned them in detail. He then went to the royal treasury and recovered the epistle on which was inscribed the details of their disappearance. Everybody then went to the cave, where the youths re-entered, had discussions and finally greeted everybody before the people departed. They stayed in the cave and passed away therein.

There is some difference of opinion among the mufassirin (commentators): some say that they are still asleep; others say that they have passed away.
Thereafter, King Baidrوs had a masjid erected near the cave as a memorial so that people should know that the youths were worshippers (abed) and not objects of worship (ma'bوd).

You will have pondered on the fact that these youths remained firm and unshaken in the Path of Allah Ta'ala. They did not bother about any anticipated future difficulties. They acted courageously in the face of Diqyanوs's oppression and tyranny, what the Ahle Haq (people on Truth) should do. Allah Ta'ala enshrouded them with His shade of perfect Bounty and Mercy and saved them from the evil of the tyrant while keeping their iman intact. Truly: Verily, become Allah's - then there will be no deficiencies. Take a lesson from the behaviour and firmness of the Ashab-e-Khahf.

44.THE MANNER OF ISAL-E-THAWAB

The fundamental aspect is conformity (mawafaqat) in our deeds (a'mal). There is no basis for making provisions in imitation of the dog of the Ashab-e-Khahf, calling a black dog and feeding it! Has this been mentioned anywhere in the Qur.an sharif or Hadith sharif? Have any of the Imams stated that one should place provisions? There is no mention of it anywhere. And what does not appear in the Qur'an sharif and Hadith sharif and Fiqh (jurisprudence) and one does it, thinking it is necessary and one has the intention of attaining reward (thawab), is bid'at (innovation) and is a great sin. Yes, if you have the means, then do as you wish, when you wish and for whomsoever you wish, with muhabbat and ikhlas, as

follows: Without getting into debt, cook whatever you wish and distribute it for isal-e-thawab (reward for the deceased). Alternatively, distribute cash, clothes or goods and let the thawab reach the deceased. Never mind objecting to this, we encourage this, that the deceased and the buzurgs (pious) be blessed in abundance in this manner. The only point we stipulate is that it should be done within the limits set by the Shariat. Those acts that merit thawab and are acts of obedience, if done under the auspices of the Shariat are maqbىl (accepted). Not those performed contrary to the qanىn (Laws).

Just take namaz - what a great act of obedience! - yet, if it is performed with the intention of ostentation, is it of benefit? Or, if performed facing away from the qiblah (the Kabah in Makkah), or performed at the time of zawal (noon exactly), or at the time the sun is setting, will the namaz be accepted? Of course not. We, therefore, come to know that any act performed in the manner one is ordered to, is worthy of being rewarded and is the basis for thawab (reward). Otherwise one is wasting one's time, one's money is lost and one earns sin instead of reward - neither has one gained anything nor has the deceased. Nobody forbids you from blessing the deceased with thawab. What is forbidden is the use of wrong methods. Understand this very well.

45.THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RECITERS OF THE KALIMAH

I have stated that the honoured Kalimah has unlimited benefits. Our solid Din and the whole of Islam rests on it. The best of zikr is: ...(LA-ILAHA.....)

If the tawhidi meaning of the Kalimah were to be entrenched and firmly implanted in our hearts then all ibadat and ta'at (worship and obedience) will become

extremely easy and, on the other hand, the heart will be extremely disgusted by disobedience.

Take our worldly affairs as an illustration: To accept any king as a king, to honour and respected his officially appointed viceroy, to be obedient, to approach him with love and affection, to be fearful of disobeying him - and avoid any disobedience - and to accept any laws that emanate from him and act according to them - all this becomes compulsory when the king is accepted as a king. It also becomes compulsory to view the laws with due respect, to consider oneself in need of the book of law, for persons having an in-depth knowledge of the law-book to be present at certain places, for these persons to be fully knowledgeable about the book and for those who are not knowledgeable to ascertain from the scholars matters concerning etiquettes, manners and refinement. It is considered necessary to bring one's affairs in line with the laws. It is also considered necessary to settle disputes according to the laws and to accept such settlements. Should any doubts arise referral of matters to higher authorities, whose decisions should be accepted with silence and with cheer - all of this has been implemented as been compulsory. Why is all this? Solely on the basis of accepting the king as a king and ruler of the kingdom all these responsibilities have become incumbent. What is compulsory, as well as its branches, are now incumbent on one's jan (life) and mal (wealth). The respect and obedience of all the functionaries become obedience of the king. Contempt and defamation of the judicial laws are tantamount to contempt and defamation of the king.

From the above it is proven that it becomes incumbent for one affirming the Kalimah Tawhid to be obedient to the Ambiya and Rasuls (A.S.) and the obedience of the Ambiya and Rasuىls (A.S.) amounts to obedience to Allah Ta'ala.

The one who has obeyed the Rasul has obeyed Allah Ta'ala. S.4 a.80

Thus, the obedience and respect of the representatives (na'ibin) of the Rasul, namely the ulema, are compulsory manifestations of iman. Contempt, defamation and the ridicule of the ulema are pernicious and manifestations of hypocrisy (nifaq).

Allah Ta'ala states:
O people of iman! Be obedient to Allah and His Rasul and those from amongst you who have knowledge; and if there is a dispute amongst yourselves over some matter, seek a solution from Allah and His Rasul (see what the Qur'an sharif and Hadith sharif states in regard to it) if you believe in Allah and the hereafter. This is the best and most excellent method. S.4 a.59

In order to recognise this iman Allah Ta'ala has stated, addressing His Rasul (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam):
Qasm of Your Lord! These folk will not be Believers (mu'min) until they do not make you the judge in the affairs between them. S.4 a.65

Even if Muslims were to be a bit free as far as their a'mal-e-salihah (pious deeds) are concerned, but were to be firm of heart in their i'tiqad and muhabbat of Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) and in their muhabbat of habbat of the ulema of Din, as well as being firm of heart in the service of their fellow men and

compassion for the creation and then they enter the grave with iman, then they have found salvation from a great calamity.

46.THE KALIMAH AND SHAHADAT-E-A'DA

This Kalimah sharif is that special formula that provides salvation and this is borne out even by shahadat-e-a'da (evidence/ proof provided by the enemies of Islam).

47.A QISSAH: THE PRIEST AND THE MUSLIM

I am reminded of an incident:

A certain person left home with the intention of going for jihad. En route he lost his way. He climbed a huge mountain. On top of the mountain he came across a gathering of a huge army of the Christians. In the centre of the gathering was placed a big chair. This person asked somebody the reason for them gathering there. One person replied, "Once a year one of our priests comes and gives us a sermon. The chair is for him."

This pious person narrates, "I quickly changed my clothes, dressing like one of them, and sat there. After a short while the priest came and sat on the chair. He cast his searching gaze in all four directions and said, 'O people gathered here! I am not going to ask you to listen to any sermon today. The reason is that there is amongst you an individual of the ummah of Muhammed!' Having said this he again cast his gaze in all four directions and called out in a loud voice, 'I take an oath on my religion! Come forward and stand before all of us so that we may beneficially drink from your radiance and adornment.'

"Hearing these words I could not desist. Reluctantly I stood up and went to stand in front of the priest. The priest addressed me. 'I have a few questions to put to you. Please provide me the answers.'"

THE FIRST QUESTION AND ITS REPLY

"'The first question is: I have heard that Jannat has fruit of various colours and differing types. Are there such fruits in this world?'

"I replied, 'Definitely there are such fruits. However, in name and colour they bear a resemblance to the fruit of Jannat, but in pleasurable taste and enjoyment they bear no resemblance.'"

THE SECOND QUESTION AND ITS REPLY

"The priest put forward a second question: 'Jannat has no such house or abode that a branch of the Tree of Tیba does not flourish in it. Is there a like example in this world?'

"I replied, 'There is. Just see: when the sun reaches its zenith, as the branches of the Tree of Tیba spreads its branches into all the houses, similarly does the sun spread its rays everywhere.'"

THE THIRD QUESTION AND ITS REPLY

"The priest asked a third question: 'Jannat has four rivers. The taste of the contents are dissimilar, yet the source of the rivers - the point of origin of all four - is one. Can one find a similar example in the world?'

"I said, 'Indeed, there is a similar example to be found in this world. Just see: the fluid from the ears is bitter; that of the eyes is salty; that from the nose is smelly;

that from the mouth is sweet. These four fluids are dissimilar in their taste and fragrance, yet their source is just one and that is the head.'"

THE FOURTH QUESTION AND ITS REPLY

"The fourth question that the priest put to me was, 'I wish to know that in Jannat there is such a large platform that it has a length of five hundred years. That is, if a person travels on it for five hundred years then only will he reach the end of it. When a mu'min wishes to climb on it, it will accommodate him by bowing low before him. When the mu'min rests on it comfortably it will carry him high up into the air. Is there any illustration of this in this world?'

"I replied, 'Why not? Just see: Allah Ta'ala states:

Do they not see how the camel has been created? S.88 a.17

"'This is an eye-witnessed scene that a camel bows its head towards the ground, then takes its passenger and then stands up.'"

THE FIFTH QUESTION AND ITS REPLY

"The priest then said, 'O generous soul! I have only one other question left to ask. It is this: I have heard that the inhabitants of Jannat will be eating a variety of food and will be drinking various types of drinks, but they will neither have the need to urinate nor to defecate. Tell me, is there such an example in this world?'

"I replied, 'Yes, there is an example like it in this world! Just see: as long as an infant is in the mother's womb, whatever the infant desires to eat, Allah Ta'ala places in the mother's heart the desire to eat that item. By the grace of Allah Ta'ala that item gets digested and then reaches the infant. Yet, as long as the child is in

the womb of the mother, neither does it defecate nor does it urinate.'

"The priest remained silent."

ONE QUESTION FOR THE PRIEST

"I told him, 'You asked me five questions. I answered each and every one. You accepted the answers. Now I wish to ask you just one question. Hopefully you too will answer me. The question is: You tell me - what is the key to Jannat?'

"The priest turned his attention to his people and said, 'O my people! This person has asked me what the key to Jannat is. So, become alert! Listen with attentive ears! I have read in the previous Heavenly Books that the key to Jannat is "the kalimah..." Saying this the priest became a Muslim and a great number of people also followed and became Muslims."

48.THE CONSOLING FRIEND OF A MUSLIM

This is that Kalimah regarding which Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) has stated:

"Jibril has informed me that the Kailmah is the companion and consoling friend of a Muslim, at the time when the frightening scene of death presents itself before him, at that time as well when the overwhelming darkness of the grave overtakes him from all four sides and also at that time when he is resurrected from the grave to proceed grief-stricken to the plains of Hashr (Reckoning)."

The provision for Jannat is this Kalimah.

This Kalimah Tayyibah is such that if it is recited with the tongue, even though the heart is inattentive, the person is rewarded with ten nèkies; if the recitation is with

an attentive heart - that is, the heart inclines to the hereafter - then the nèkies rewarded are seven hundred; and if at the time of recitation the heart bonds in a special way with Allah Ta'ala, then the nèkies attained are such in number that they will fill the space from east to west!

The haqiqat (reality) is this that that person who annihilates his self on a permanent basis- visualizes his being as nothing - reaches the high stage of baqa, and becomes synonymous with Baqi-billah. Then, when fana' (death) comes, it comes only to his form.

49.THE TAUBAH OF A FIRE-WORSHIPPER

I am reminded of an incident"

Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) saw a person worshipping fire. Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) went up to him and said, "Tell me, has the time not approached for you to turn to the worship of Allah Ta'ala?"

He replied, "O Mىsa! Should I now turn to Him, tell me, will He accept my taubah (repentance)?"

Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) said, "Definitely! It is His special, noble quality that He is always ready to accept the taubah of those who turn to Him."

The fire-worshipper said, "If that is the case, then you explain Islam to me and I shall become a Muslim now!" Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) did this and he became a Muslim. He was so overcome that he started wailing and crying uncontrollably, to the extent that he fainted and fell lifeless. When Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) went up to him and placed his hand on him he found him to have really died!

Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) was extremely consternated and turned to Allah Ta'ala, saying, "What happened?"
Allah Ta'ala replied, "O Mىsa! Do you not know that whoever reconciles with Us - whoever turns towards Us in repentance - We become pleased with him? Whoever desires Our nearness (qurb), We grant him nearness. O Musa! I have made him of the muqarrabin (those who have attained closeness to Allah Ta'ala) and have granted him a place in the homes of the muqarrabin."

This is the quality of the Kalimah. If the other Kalimas (of the other Ambiya (A.S.) were to have this effect, then what can one say about the effect of our Kalimah.

50.THE BLESSING OF ISLAM :A QISSAH
In the time of Hadhrat Malik Bin Dinar (r.a.) there were two brothers, both of whom were Majىsi (Zoroastrian fire- worshippers). They had spent their entire life in fire-worshipping. One day the younger brother said to his elder brother, "We have spent a long time in worshipping this great fire. Come, let us gauge whether this fire will still burn us or not. Should it burn us, we shall renounce its worship; otherwise we shall absorb ourselves in its worship permanently."

Agreeing on this, both brothers thrust their hands into the fire. What happened? The fire burned them instantaneously!
If a fire-worshipper were to foster a fire for a hundred years and then place his hand in it, it will still burn him.
The two brothers went to Hadhrat Malik Bin Dinar (r.a.) with the purpose of

accepting Islam. The younger brother accepted Islam, however the elder brother refused to do so.

The younger brother, having accepted Islam, went into the wilderness and immersed himself in ibadat. When he reached home in the evening his wife asked, "Have you brought anything for us to eat?" He replied, "I did the King's work but my wages I shall get tomorrow." The same thing happened on the following day and this carried on for three days. On the third day, when this abed (worshipper) and devotee of Islam reached the wilderness, he made a du'a, "O my Rabb! Seeing you have entered me into a pure religion and blessed me with honour, lift from me also the concern of earning for my wife and children."

In the evening, having completed his ibadat, he went home to find his wife and children in an extremely exuberant mood and saw sufficient food in the house. He asked, "Where did all this food come from?" The wife replied, "Today, at the time of Zuhr, a person came with a resplendent container with a thousand dinars in it, gave it to me and then went away. Before leaving he left this message, 'Say to your husband that these are the wages for all his days of labour which he did for the King.'" The wife explained further, "I took one dinar to the money-changer who was a Christian. He scrutinised the dinar very closely and then said, 'This dinar does not appear to be in the category of worldly dinars. It appears to be from the treasures of the hereafter! Tell me the truth - how did you get it?' I explained to him everything in detail. Hearing my story he became a Muslim. He gave me a thousand dirhams and fell prostrate into sajdah and became of the bandagan-e-

shakirin (the grateful bondsmen of Allah Ta'ala)."

All praise and thanks are to Allah Ta'ala for having blessed us with Islam!

And this blessing is more than sufficient. Make shukr (be thankful and grateful) that Allah Ta'ala has blessed you with the wealth of Islam, the Din of Mohammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam). But, alas! Allah Ta'ala states complainingly, Very few of My bondsmen are grateful! S.34. a.13

This wealth of iman is that regarding which Allah Ta'ala states:

..and My mercy embraceth all things, therefore I shall ordain it for those who adopt taqwa and pay zakat and those who believe Our revelations.. S.7 a.156.

51.THE SPECIAL QUALITIES OF THE KALIMAH

Pondering on the above ayet one will see that Allah Ta'ala has stated firmly that His Mercy for the mu'minin, muttaqin is that they will enter Jannat in the first instance, but there is no promise of entering Jannat in the first instance for those who have mere iman without taqwa (fear of Allah Ta'ala). Therefore, on what basis can it be correct for those mu'minin who do not perform salat, do no fast, etc. to state that Allah Ta'ala is merciful and that He will forgive all without any punishment and chastisement, despite disobedience and wrong-doing? This is a Shaitani ploy. It is called arrogance and deception.

Somebody asked Hadhrat Ali Bin Muىsa (R.A.), "Inform us of some Hadith, with a proper chain and authenticated narrators, that you have heard from your honoured father." On this request he said, "Very well. Listen! My sagely father, Mىsa, was told by his father, Jafar, who was told by his father, Baqr, who was told

by his father, Zainul- abedin, who was told by his father, Hىsain, and Hadhrat Husain (R.A.) said, 'My sagely father Hadhrat Ali Bin Abi Talib (R.A.) narrated a Hadith that Hadhrat Fakhr, Rasىl-e- Khataman-Ambiya, Janab Muhammed Mustafa (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) said, "What is iman? It is the heartfelt gnosis of Allah Ta'ala, a verbal affirmation and deeds according to the Laws."'

This Kalimah sharif is that noble and elevated declaration from which all the Ambiya (A.S.) derived faiz (blessings) in the alim-e- Arwah and Malakىt (the World of Souls and Angels); and from which, in the alim-e-Ajsam and Nasىt (the Physical and Finite World), the honoured Sahaba (R.A.), the esteemed Auliya and the general populace of mu'minin imbibed and satiated themselves according to their individual capacities.

The first to derive benefit was Hadhrat Adam (A.S.).When the rىh (soul), aql (intelligence), ilm (knowledge) and ma'rifate-ilahi (gnosis of Allah Ta'ala) dawned within him, at that moment he attempted to get up but his legs quivered and he fell down. He tried again but again fell down - in the same manner that we see infants attempting to stand up and falling down in the initial stages of them learning to walk. Hadhrat Adam (A.S.) was in this position, with one leg bent at the knee supporting him and the other leg on the ground, when Allah Ta'ala blessed him with mushahadah (His Vision). Involuntarily, from the lips of Hadhrat Adam (A.S.) the words flowed:

This is why it is said that all of Bani adam (children of Adam, i.e. mankind) are from Hadhrat Adam (A.S.) in that they all - voluntarily or involuntarily, lovingly

and passionately - voice the Kalimah uttered by their father Hadhrat Adam (A.S.): No nation and no religion is unaware of the superiority of this Kalimah. It is stated in "Waid" (the scriptures of the Hindus):

The essence of this is that the scripture "Waid" is explaining the special quality of, that reciting.. burns away all one's sins; that reciting "A à A produces ma'rifat, enthusiasm and passion in the heart; and if one desires a pure and everlasting life, then recite with it , as well. In other words, without the acknowledgment of the Risalat of Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) everlasting comfort and pleasure - i.e. Jannat - will not be attained.

52.PRE-REQUISITE OF IMAN

However, just knowing that an item is superior does not necessarily entail believing it to be superior. That is why a non-Muslim does not become a Muslim merely by knowing the Kalimah to be superior. The reason is that believing is termed iman, not merely knowing. As for being acquainted, the kuffar of Makkah knew Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) very well - as well as a person knows his own son, where there is no room for any doubt. Allah Ta'ala states: They know Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) as well as they know their own sons. S.2 a.146

Despite this information and knowledge they did not become mu'min. They remained kuffar. The pre-requisite for iman is that in one's heart one should accept the Laws of the Shariah and one should not be troubled in any way with any wavering. This is stated in the Qur'an sharif, where Allah Ta'ala takes an oath and addresses Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam):

On the oath of your Rabb! These folk will not be Believers (mu'min) until they do not make you the judge in the disputes between them, thereafter they find no dislike in accepting what you have decided and they submit with full submission. S.4 a.65

In other words: "They will not be Muslim until they do not give precedence to your ruling over their own opinions and are content on it." Further to this: "After the ruling of Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) there should be no inhibition in your hearts." Thereafter, as a sign of the absence of vexation in the heart, it is stated: "And act upon it with firmness."

This is iman! The orders of the Shariah should be accepted wholeheartedly, that there should be no begrudging whatsoever and then to act accordingly. This is kamal-e-iman (perfect iman)! Check your iman according to these criteria!

That Being is Samadi (Absolute). He is a Being that may reward one in an unlimited manner. The shortcomings are from our side.
His blessings and mercy are general, O Shahid!
Why show obstinacy, when you should have shown some worthiness?

53.A FEW VIRTUES OF THE KALIMAH

He (Allah Ta'ala) has such a Noble and Majestic status that, as it appears in the Hadith sharif, when the bandah utters "A -A î»aA à the ceilings of the heavens split asunder and become roads (for it to proceed heavenward). And when this Kalimah is written in his Book of Good Deeds (a'mal-e-namah), its radiance is like that of the full moon, whereas his other deeds scattered around, appear like glittering stars.

It appears in a Hadith sharif that a tree of red rubies is planted in Jannat for that person who recites "....."A à. Its trunk, boughs and leaves are composed of pure white mushk. The taste of its fruit is sweeter than honey; the colour whiter than ice; and its fragrance more aromatic than mushk. A person said, "O Rasulullah! (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) If this is the case then we shall recite (the Kalimah) in abundance!" Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) said, "Allah Ta'ala will also grant abundant blessings and eminence. There will there be an increase in blessings and eminence from Allah Ta'ala's side proportionate to the extent that you recite the Kalimah in abundance."

54.CONCLUSION AND DU'A

On this note I now end my talk. You will have now become completely enlightened as to the goodness and reality of the Din of Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) and the religion of Islam and of the Kalimah.Make du'a that Allah Ta'ala blesses us all with the taufiq of everlasting iman and obedience. May Muslims take work with courage and effort. Allah Ta'ala's promise on granting taufiq is bound to working with courage and effort.

Book:

Discourses of Maulana Maseeullah Khan Sahib (RA)

Chapter No.:

15

FOREWORD

Booklet Number Thirteen is now ready, once again solely though the fadhl of Allah ta'ala and the barkat of our Sheikh (r.a.).

In the first part of the majlis that has translated for this edition, our Hadhrat(r.a.) discusses some important principles of sulىk. The beginner may not fully comprehend the issues discussed but our Hadhrat's (r.a.) advice is to imbibe the lessons so that, when the salik progresses along the path of sulىk and encounters these issues, he will be aware of them and overcome the obstacles.

That is not to say that this majlis is meant only for that salik who has progressed quite far. Further on Hadhrat(r.a.) discusses many important issues with supporting Qur'an Sharief Ayaat. Like every majlis of our Hadhrat(r.a.) this majlis contains something for everyone.

Among the techniques that our Hadhrat(r.a.) employed was one of asking rhetorical questions. He would put forward questions where the answers were obvious. In this way those who were present were made to think for themselves what the logical conclusions of a series of statements were. In this particular majlis this technique has been used extensively. Hadhrat's (r.a.) purpose was to draw out from the listeners certain points instead of these being spoon-fed to them.

May Allah ta'ala give us all the taufiq to practise according to these teachings.
Dr. Ismaiel Mangera.
[This is a translation of a majlis held by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Masihullah Khan Sahib (R.A.) in Jalalabad, India, on the 1st September, 1986, corresponding to the 26th Zil Hajj 1406]

EFFECT OF THE QUR'AN SHARIEF

The kuffar and mushrikin leaders of Makkah and others used to call the blessed speech of Rasulullah(sallallahu aliyhi wassallam) 'magic'. People still use the term 'magic' for the speeches of some people, saying that "the lecture was magical," meaning that there was a bewitching attraction in it and a very profound effect - "What a magical talk it was!"

In the same way the kuffar of Makkah also called the Qur'an Sharif 'magical'. It had the effect of striking a blow to the nafs so that nafsaniyet moves out and diminishes continuously. The nafs becomes corpse-like - like a dead body. Subhanallah! What bullet-wound can be better than that? A bullet from a pistol is a

physical shot; this is a metaphysical shot. The former causes destruction of the body; the latter causes destruction of the nafs.

If the physical body is destroyed what remains? Nothing. The reason is the grounds on which a'mal (deeds) are performed are dependent on life - for one to perform deeds it is necessary that one should be alive - life being the vehicle for a'mal. So, when there is no life left then no deeds can be performed and thus there is no progress, because progress is dependent on the performance of deeds (a'mal). There are no deeds performed after death. If there are no deeds then how can there be progress?

IMPORTANCE OF TAUBAH & ISTIGFaR

In the state of being alive the reparation, the remedy for shortcomings is achieved by making istigfar (repentance). However in the akhirat - in the Hereafter - istigfar will be of no use and will not compensate for any evil deeds and sins committed while alive.

So consider life, which is a vehicle, to be a great bounty. Consider it a great bounty for the attaining greater qurb (closeness) of Allah ta'ala and for increasing one's ta'alluq (connection) with Allah ta'ala. Each breath is of great value. For this reason also that as long as there is breath there is hope: as long as one is alive there is scope for reparation as well as for progress. One can compensate for shortcomings. The remedial process for shortcomings is reciting istigfar and also making istigfar with heartfelt contrition. Making istigfar is in itself a hasanah (good deed). By resorting to istigfar evil deeds become annulled.

Similar to istigfar, other ibadat (acts of worship) are also hasanah. In this situation there is no sign of any istigfar yet the hasanah is in the deed performed and evil is annulled. Allah ta'ala states:

innal hasanat............

Verily hasanat (good deeds) annul evil deeds. S.11 a.114

In other words, hasanat destroys evil; hasanat shoves it away; hasanat washes away evil; hasanat tells evil to take a walk, as if to say, "I am now here, so there is no room for you here!" Because of the nafs the body may have done some evil, so this evil is told, "There is no work for you to do here now." Take the example of a dark room: a candle was lit and the candle tells the darkness, "There is no work for you to do here now. Go! Get out!"

Do you understand? Do you understand my Urdu? Whenever there are newcomers from foreign countries I tend to enquire whether they understand.

POISONS & ANTIDOTES

Allah ta'ala has created certain effects. With regard to poisons of a material nature Allah ta'ala has created appropriate antidotes. Allah ta'ala has created opposites in this world. If a doctor gives some medication to a patient and the medication creates a harmful effect in the body then the doctor will administer an antidote that will counteract the ill-effect of the first medication.

In a very similar manner, to an even greater extent, Allah ta'ala has kept (at the spiritual level) a substitute and a muslih - that thing that will cause rectification

(islah), that thing that will eradicate an evil. Sin is a poison and taubah is the antidote for it. To what a degree has Allah ta'ala not poured his bounties on us! Together with creating physical poisons Allah ta'ala has created the antidotes for these very poisons. Similarly with internal poisons, the batini poisons, which take the form of sins, Allah ta'ala has shown us the antidotes for these as well. Allah ta'ala is virtually saying, "I know that Man will ingest poisons, at times in error, at times deliberately. Should it so happen, I have created antidotes. These should then be taken. In a similar way I know that, despite having brought iman on Me, you are going to commit acts contrary to My Orders. When you do this there will even be some among you who will become terrified at this, with tears flowing from the eyes, weeping with a heart filled with contrition, lamenting, 'I have gone against the Orders of my Creator! What to do now? What can I do now? Oh, what's to be done now?' I know you from before - I am alimul-gaib (Knower of the unseen). It is in answer to that person who cries out, 'What can I do?' that I have created taubah!"

TAUBAH IS NOT FOR EVERYBODY

Do you understand? For such a person, because not everybody makes taubah. Did Shaytan make taubah? We all know that he did not. So, Allah ta'ala has laid down a condition - for such a person, because, although taubah has been created, not everybody is going to make use of taubah. Take poison again: although poison has been created, not everybody is going to ingest poison. Allah ta'ala is the Creator of everything: He has created poison and has also made it known that this poison and He has also created the antidote and made it known that this is its antidote. In a

similar way there are sins, which are spiritual poisons, but together with these taubah has been created. What a great bounty has Allah ta'ala not blessed us with! He is saying, "There will also be such people who will perpetrate deeds contrary to My Orders, but they will be terrified at their actions - they will be agitated and distressed. Until they have not made amends for this, until they have not remedied it they will not rest with ease. They will not know what its atonement is and in what way to remedy it. And I have muhabbat (love) for him. So, I have shown before hand that I have created taubah." Taubah is for such a person - not for everybody.

COMMITTING SIN IS NOT FOR EVERYBODY

To commit sin is also not for everybody. There are a great number of the creation who abstain completely from sin. So much so that one will hear people say, "That person is a born-wali!" Have you not heard such comments? Yes, you have. "What can one say about him? Subhanallah! Wah! Wah! He is a wali from birth!" Do you see that? This very point I was making that such a person has not gone near any sin throughout his whole life.

However, being human, it can happen that a person falls into sin. This person is now agitated and distressed. He will be terrified. What to do now? If he has not been shown how to make reparations he may commit suicide! He thinks, "What is the purpose of my living? I have become Shaytan!" Thus, Allah ta'ala is saying "I have shown the means of reparation does exist for such people: it is istigfar."

So, to commit sin is not for everybody, but sin has been created - sin has been created and taubah has also been created. However, to commit sin is not for everybody and taubah is not for every sinner.

The Ambiya (a.s.) were human, but there is just no question of them having committed sins. And it is not necessary even to mention the angels - the reason being that they just do not possess that other faculty (i.e. nafs) that can result in mèlan occurring. The Ambiya (a.s.) do possess this quality of having mèlan because they are human and Allah ta'ala has kept in them human instincts as well. The capacity to become angry is kept in a Nabi (a.s.). He possesses nafsani mèlan and shahwat (passions) as well. If these were not kept in him how would he have children? The Ambiya (a.s.) did have children, is that not so? To beget children is possible if they approached their wives. And approaching their wives is possible only if they had mèlan. So, a Nabi (A.S.) will possess mèlan and shahwat.

MبLaN

Yes, however, these qualities will not be utilised inappropriately. The mèlan will not be used in an inappropriate situation. But mèlan there will be. So, we come to learn that mèlan, in itself - per se - is not a sin. Even a Nabi (A.S.) is not exempt from mèlan. Mèlan may appear in a Nabi (a.s.) even before nikah (marriage).

Do you understand what I am saying? I am a talibul-'ilm (student of Din). These are points to listen to attentively and pondered on - not to be passed over superficially.

MبLaN AND A NABI

Mèlan occurred to a Nabi (a.s.) as well before the nikah, before the marriage ceremony. This was the case with Hadhrat adam (a.s.). The incident is as follows: Hadhrat Adam (a.s.) was all alone in Jannat. Allah ta'ala created a companion for him, Hadhrat Hawwa (a.s.). Allah ta'ala had Himself created Hadhrat Adam (a.s.) so what would be the beauty of the companion? Hadhrat Hawwa (a.s.) was created from Hadhrat Adam's (a.s.) left side and she sat on his left. Can you imagine the extreme beauty and charm of Hadhrat Hawwa (a.s.) - how charming she was, how fine and delicate her skin was, how much allure there must have been in her form? Any daughters born to her would also have these attractive qualities. When Hadhrat adam (a.s.) turned to his left and saw Hadhrat Hawwa (a.s.) he extended his hand towards her. No nikah had been performed as yet. This is in the nature of man - his fitrat. Suddenly an alarm rang in his heart: "Hén! Hén! Hén!" This alarm, this "Hén! Hén! Hén!" rang out and Hadhrat adam (a.s.) halted.

So, this mèlan is an instinctive, natural quality. However, to follow through is contrary to the Shariah. It is now clear that merely for mèlan to exist is no sin. After the mèlan, when intention and resolve enter in this direction, then there is pollution. There is no defilement in mere mèlan. When the person chooses to ignore the contamination and persists with his resolve then will come association. Do you understand my words?1 The boy will now link-up with the girl and the girl will now link-up with the boy. Now a deliberate intention is a factor. They will write to one another. They will speak with one another. However, if the person's attention is drawn to this mèlan and he is forewarned then he will be on guard.

Then there will be no question of contamination and if there is no contamination then there is no question of association either.

Do you understand my talk? This discourse of mine is directed to the taliban-e-Haq - the seekers of Truth. This discourse is directed to those who are really sincere and truthful seekers of their islah. I mention this because one does not know nowadays who comes and just sits down in the majlis. Even then, such a person is not bereft of benefit, provided that has no enmity and no hasad. It is not so that only those who are devotees will benefit. No. Even those who sit with an open mind will definitely benefit, provided that they do not have enmity like Shaytan developed enmity, like Abu Jahl and Abu Lahb developed enmity against Rasulullah(sallallahu aliyhi wassallam), and so forth.

PLOY OF SHAYTaN

One should be completely open-minded and not deliberately think and ponder out and bring to mind criticisms, otherwise Shaytan will come to one. Should such thoughts come to mind unpremeditated and one realises that they are contrary to Haq then immediately become 'mindless' of them and develop disgust for them. Allah ta'ala states in the Qur'an Sharif:

Innama najw...

This is an absolutely amazing ayet! Just as you folk whisper amongst yourselves privately, just so Allah ta'ala states that from his side Shaytan whispers - he instils wisawis, khatarat, khiyalat and hadithun-nafs2 - to the mu'min and with the

mu'min, with the object of causing him to fall into despondency and sorrow. Remember this very well.

Do you understand? Shaytan is not visible but he whispers secretly. If you remember this is what he did to Imam Razi (r.a.). Imam Razi (r.a.) was a great 'alim (scholar). Despite this Shaytan still whispered into his heart, very stealthily instilling doubts into his heart. Yet Shaytan cannot be seen. Allah ta'ala is acquainting us with Shaytan. Allah ta'ala is stating that Shaytan desires to throw the mu'min into gloom and grief. So, when these warnings have become firmly embedded in one's heart, will one still pay any attention to wisawis, to stray thoughts and doubts? Of course not. It is Shaytan's objective that the mu'min should not be happy but should be despondent and grieving. The reason is that Hadhrat adam (a.s.) was a mu'min and it was through this mu'min, Hadhrat adam (a.s.), that he developed enmity. The enmity progressed to the extent of hostility.

DO NOT DEBATE WITH TWO TYPES

That is why it is written that one should not converse with two types of people; do not have discussions with two types of people; do not debate or contend with two kinds of people: one is that person who is thick-skulled and stupid; the other is that person who has enmity towards you:

· As to the one who is an idiot, he will not understand what you are saying, so why waste your precious time?

· As to the one who harbours enmity, his animosity will increase and he will now have it in for you and harm you. You have now brought trouble on yourself. Why did you debate with him? His hostility has increased. When it becomes apparent

and it is proven that the person is not a talib - not a seeker of Haq - and he has even a bit of enmity in him, then never have discussions with such a person.

DA'WAH

Huzur Rasulullah(sallallahu aliyhi wassallam) came verily for tabligh. This was his compulsory duty. One carrying out this duty is called a Pegambar, a Rasul. Despite this read through Surah Abasa. Learn it off. The background to this Surah is that Rasulullah(sallallahu aliyhi wassallam) was giving da'wah inviting them to Tauhid, which is fundamental to Islam . He was giving da'wah to the Quraish kuffar, the leaders of the Quraish. However, they were not talib. They were not seekers. They were in opposition, not in accord. Despite this Rasulullah(sallallahu aliyhi wassallam) was giving them da'wah. This was the purpose for Rasulullah(sallallahu aliyhi wassallam) coming, to give da'wah.

Hadhrat Abdullah Ibni Maktum (R.A.) was a blind Sahabi. He approached Rasulullah(sallallahu aliyhi wassallam) at that very moment to enquire about a matter concerning a detail of Din which he found it necessary to be elucidated on. He made an attempt to ask. Rasulullah(sallallahu aliyhi wassallam) disapproved of his intrusion and did not answer him and turned his face away. From Allah ta'ala an ayet was revealed:

abasa watawaalaa....

Take note that the address is on an impersonal note: There is a person. A blind person came to him and asked him a question so he turned his face away and displeasure was exhibited on his face. Like I said: Take note that an impersonal

form of address has been adopted. Allah ta'ala wanted to conceal the incident concerning Huzur Akram (sallallahu aliyhi wassallam). Others must not think that Allah ta'ala was displeased with His beloved Habib sallallahu aliyhi wassallam). Allah ta'ala did not state . He did not state..... Grammatically these direct addresses would imply a reprimand, which the indirect form of address does not contain: There is a person....

Now, how will you know whose islah will take place and whose islah will not take place? Allah ta'ala states:

wa maa yudri......

Whose tazkiyah (purification) will take place and whose tazkiyah will not take place? How will you know who will benefit from your talk and who will not? Allah ta'ala is stating, "Just see here! I will show you.."

THE ARROGANT AND THE TALIB

Amma manistagna...

Those who are showing disdain, displaying their arrogance, are not giving even any thought to your talk, yet you are running after them? It is not permissible to run after these. (Tasadda-lil-gair is not ja'iz.) It is not permissible to run after the disinterested (gair) when it is apparent that they are not talib but will develop greater scorn towards our views and, in their opinion, hold other views to be Haq in comparison to ours. How will such a people accept our views? We thus

understand that one should not have discussions with those displaying disdain and arrogance. One should speak to those who are talib. This is basic.

Wa amma min jaa-aka...

And that poor soul, having the fear of Allah ta'ala, hastening towards you to enquire about a Dini matter, is shunned by you?

Allah ta'ala has shown a principle in this, as if to say, "You have been sent for this very purpose of Da'wah. The issue is just one fine point: You should merely take note as to who is a talib and who is not a talib; who has hastened with humility and who is sitting with haughtiness. See to this. Your attitude is understandable, in that your temperament is very gentle, one of great tenderness. You have tremendous compassion within you. It does happen at times, out of extreme affection and immense compassion, a necessary issue is overlooked; or, even though it is remembered, yet at a certain point when one is overwhelmed by a different issue facing one, it is forgotten.

However, the One Who is Greater, is emphasizing the point, directing attention to it that these are issues to bear in mind. Otherwise those whose rights have priority will be relegated to the back and those whose rights are secondary will be given priority. Or those who have no rights will be attended to and those who have rights will be left out.

Also, because of the degree of affection in you temperament, it logically follows that this affection may be overwhelming, so it is necessary for Me to point out with regard to the kuffar: Why do you not display anger towards them? (S. 66. a.9)

What tremendous degree of affection are you not showing! On the other hand Hadhrat Mىsa (a.s.) was told to adopt leniency: Speak a bit kindly to him (Fir'oun). (S.20 a. 24)

So, as the occasion demands, Allah ta'ala will instruct the Nabi (a.s.) and give him the necessary advice. How would we know how to approach which person, when and under what circumstances? Laws and rules have been set down for the future. If these incidents did not occur at that time, how could laws be derived? How would one know how to approach which individual, on what occasion, in which manner? From this one can assess just how great is the necessity for having correct knowledge (ulume-sahihah), especially a muballigh (one propagating the Din). A muballigh - one making tabligh - when approaching an individual, needs to have the correct 'ilm (ulىme-sahihah) to be able to recognise the individual, his temperament, the time and the occasion. It is very essential to attain correct 'ilm. And how essential it is to acquire the sohbat (companionship) of a muhaqqiq to reach the haqiqat of correct 'ilm. This is the second aspect I have presented to you.

THE BEST OF SCHOLARS

Thus, talab - quest - is what has been elaborated on by Rasulullah(sallallahu aliyhi wassallam). When this is understood then:

ne'mal faqih...

The best faqih is he who benefits that individual who comes with talab-e-sadiq (sincere quest) and with humility. A ne'mal faqih - one who has a deep/correct understanding of Din - is that person who, when people disclose their needs to him

as far as Din is concerned, benefits them. And those people who display indifference then he himself should also adopt an indifferent stance. This is a basic principle - an usیl. This is the duty of a faqih. This is the function of an excellent scholar (behtarin faqih).

MبLaN AND NATURE - MبLaN AND THE SHARIAH

This topic has cone in incidentally. We were discussing mèlan. If there was no such thing as mèlan then Hadhrat adam (a.s.) would not have had mèlan. Hadhrat adam (a.s.) was created by Allah ta'ala with the status of a Nabi, even though the manifestation of the Nabیwwat came only afterwards. However, the station of Nabیwwat was kept in him. Despite this, before the nikah, Hadhrat adam (a.s.) saw an exquisitely beautiful individual, one created from his rib, sitting nearby and he developed mèlan towards her. With the development of the mèlan he even stretched out his hand towards her. This mèlan was not a prohibited instinct, it was not forbidden, it was not banned, but there was a impediment present in acting according to this mèlan. So, mèlan is the work of the temperament and safeguarding is the work of the Shariah. Mèlan in itself is not forbidden. If there was no Shariah then acting on mèlan would have been permissible because it is part of one's nature, part of one's temperament. However, the Shariah has come and placed a barrier. Otherwise the lineage would have been spoilt - the genealogy would not be pure. So nikah comes in-between.

It is thus apparent that mèlan comes to a Nabi (a.s.) as well. So - are you listening attentively? - if mèlan occurs in a wali then will he be terrified? No, he will be very happy! This is a very deep aspect this faqir is stating! Yes, a wali will be extremely

happy because: " Even in this attribute I am in accord with a Nabi (a.s.)!" Do you understand the point or not?

The work of tabligh is very easy, but to have these qualities within oneself to do tabligh is very difficult. As much as the degree of similarity with a Nabi (a.s.) increases to that degree will one's perfection (kamal) increase. How can that person be human who has no mèlan in him whatsoever? Kamal (perfection) is this that one has mèlan and "Oh! Oh!" intervenes and one stops oneself. The Shariah with its "Oh! Oh!" intervenes and one halts as Hadhrat adam (a.s.) halted. After all, whose progeny are we? The mu'min, progeny whose is he? He is the progeny of Hadhrat adam (a.s.). And the kuffar, whose progeny are they? Biologically they are also the progeny of Hadhrat adam (a.s.) but are they?

BEING A SON AND BEING ONE'S AHL

Hadhrat Nیh (a.s.) had appealed to Allah ta'ala with regard to his son, "This is my son and he is drowning! O Allah! It is Your promise that You will save my children and save them from punishment." Allah ta'ala replied, "The promise pertains to your children, but is he your child?

"Laisa min ahlik -

He said, "O Nیh! He is not of your ahl." S.11 a.46

This is stated in the eloquent style of the Qur'an Sharif. Allah ta'ala has placed in it a very high and subtle point. Allah ta'ala did not say, "Laisa min auladik - he is not of your children." He did not say, "Laisa min waladik - he is not your boy." He did

not say, "Laisa min ibnik - he is not your son." He was his progeny. He was his son. How can it be said that he was not his son?

Do you understand? Sometimes some very fine and subtle points also get mentioned.

Allah ta'ala said, "Laisa min ahlik - he is not of your ahl. If he was of your ahl then he would have resembled you. Intrinsically your qualities would have been in him." This is what the term "ahl" actually means.

From "ahl" we also have the word "ahlullah" - the ahl of Allah Ta'ala. So, the ahlullah will have in them the characteristics of Allah ta'ala. They have in them the attributes of Allah ta'ala. It is not that a wali will not have any gussah (anger/ rage) in him. What type of wali is that? A wali should have gussah within him. But what type of gussah? Gussah like that of Allah ta'ala!

Do you understand? You honoured visitors have traveled here from quite far away countries. I feel very compassionate towards you, that you have spent so much money in traveling here and have endured the discomfort and difficulties of journeying here.

GUSSAH - ANGER/RAGE

As I was saying, Allah ta'ala also gets angry, is this not so? So, who is saying that this mu'min- bandah should not become angry? Who is saying that he must not express his anger? If gussah were to disappear completely how would he become angry? However, it needs to be emphasized that the gussah should be like that of Allah ta'ala. Your anger should be the same as that of Allah ta'ala for the reason

that you are of the ahlullah. And since you are of the ahlullah you should have the facility within you of expressing appropriately in a similar manner that Allah ta'ala appropriately expresses His qualities. In other words, check to see if it is the correct occasion to express gussah or not. Check to see whether you are showing gussah for your own satisfaction? Are you showing gussah to cool yourself down? Are you showing gussah to please yourself? Are you showing gussah to display your high and mighty status? Are you showing gussah to humiliate and embarrass the next person? Are you showing gussah to disgrace him in the eyes of other people?

Alternatively, are you showing gussah for the protection of the rights of those whose rights are infringed? Are you showing gussah to protect the rights of those whose tarbiyet (self-rectification) you have to make? The gussah in these latter situations are is not for self-satisfaction, not for cooling down, not for self-glorification, not for displaying one's power and importance among the people. There is no question of ego-boosting - there is no sign of contempt in his attitude. On the contrary, it is to protect him from harm - it is for his tarbiyet that he is being shown adab (manners/ etiquette)

Do you understand the point?

WILL A MU'MIN ENTER JAHANNAM?

Just see: Allah ta'ala will send some mu'minin into Jahannam. Will this not happen? Is, it will. Now, when these mu'minin are sent into Jahannam, will they be sent there out of enmity? No! They will be sent there out of friendliness; they will

be sent there out of affection, for the attainment of adab. Allah ta'ala will be virtually saying, "You were admonished previously. Why did you not rectify yourself and learn adab while still in the world? Yet, at the time you used to brush it aside saying, 'Illness comes and goes.' Why did you not take a lesson from it? On another occasion an incident took place, blemishing your name and honour. This was also a punishment. Why did you not take a lesson from it? At times you suffered some material loss. Why did you not take a lesson from these losses? The illness was there to bring home a lesson and so, too, were the dishonour and the material losses. So, why did you not derive lessons from these and turn towards Me? Why was there no rujى- ilallah? Why was your heart not crushed and softened by these events? Those evil deeds that you committed contrary to My Orders - why did you not discard them? Such brazen impudence? So, now you are being sent to Jahannam for cleansing - ta'diban, tahziban, ta'alluqan - and not for punishment, not for bringing grief."

Little children are nurtured in this way: If the child is spanked, is it to cause him harm or grief? No. The reason is to teach him manners, to rectify his habits, to make him cultured.

Now do you understand the reality of gussah? Gussah has been explained to you. Gussah is not for personal ends - it is not to satisfy your heart, it is not to exhibit your exalted status, it is not to disgrace others, it is not to bring contempt to others in the eyes of the community. Gussah exercised in this manner will then be an imitation of Allah ta'ala's gussah.

BUT... Can each and every individual accomplish this? This cannot be achieved until and unless the nafs is not under control. The individual has to control his nafs - his life, his temperament, his self, his ego, his senses. These are different terms used to describe the nafs. Even now some of us have not understood the meaning of the word "nafs"! This nafs has to be controlled to the degree that it does not act inappropriately - that nothing occurs out of place.

Akhlaqe-razilah (the blameworthy/ disgraceful qualities) are blameworthy (razilah) as long as they are utilised for rizalat (disgraceful ends). What do you understand? And if they are not used for disgraceful acts but for good deeds then they cease to be razilah. Therefore, in outward appearance, the gussah of one person may appear to be the same as that of the next person's but, in reality, they will be completely different. Allah ta'ala also displays gussah. Thus, every gussah - in absolute terms - is not haram (forbidden).

If it were so and gussah was absolutely haram then how would the huqىqs (rights) of the Din be preserved? How will the rights of others be protected? Whatever Allah ta'ala has created is either to ward off harm or to gain some benefit. Gussah has also been created by Allah ta'ala. If gussah, as an absolute value, was impure, filthy and haram, then why did Allah ta'ala create it? Gussah has also been created to be used on some correct and appropriate occasion. However, it is not an easy task to recognise the correct and appropriate occasion. Even if it turns out to be easy to recognise the correct occasion then too it is not easy to act appropriately, until and unless the nafs is not under complete control.

These are those special aspects that one has to learn by going to stay with the masha'ikh, by handing oneself completely over to them. In what manner? In the following manner:

EXAMPLE OF THE DHOBI

For example:
Take it that you want to have your dirty clothes washed and you hand these over to the dhobi (washerman) to wash.

Arabic
Entrust yourself over to the masha'ikh as you entrust your clothes to the dhobi .

Having entrusted the clothes to the dhobi do you now have any say in the matter of washing? Not in the least! For illustration: You pitch up at the dhobi's house and you see him rubbing your clothes in the faecal pellets of goats. You are shocked. "Arè! Arè! What are you doing to my clothes? I gave my clothes to you to make them pak (pure) but here you are defiling them!" The dhobi replies curtly, "Very well. Sir! Here are your kurtas and clothes. Take them back with you. According to your understanding I do not know my work - so why did you bring your clothes to me?" The dhobi is offended. You apologise. "I am truly sorry. I was not aware." He softens at your apology. "Very well. Let me carry on with my work."

At a later stage the dhobi moistens the clothes, wraps them up into a bundle and places them over a fire. With the heat of the fire steam soon rises up from the clothes. You pitch up at this moment. What do you see? Your clothes are on top of a fire and smoke is coming out from them. You are again shocked. "Arè! Arè!

What are you doing? Did I give my clothes to you to clean or to set on fire? Look! The fire is burning my clothes!" The dhobi is noticeably irritated. "Very well. Here, take your clothes with you!" You realise your error and you are again apologetic. He relents again.

Later still he takes your clothes to the riverside. He takes your garments one by one and thrashes then upon the flat stones in the water. He then spreads out your garments and beats then with a wooden batten. Amazingly, you have to pitch up at that moment! "Arè! Arè!" you shout in shocked tones. "What are you doing? What are you up to? Are you cleaning my clothes or destroying them? Rascal! This is enough! Each time I see you doing something or other to damage my clothes - rubbing them in some excreta, placing them on a fire and now thrashing them with a batten on some stones!" This time the dhobi is extremely offended. "Take your clothes and go away!" Sensibly, you apologise again. Again he relents and carries on with his work.

In the final stage he is back at home. Having spread your clothes on his table he is busy ironing them with a hot iron, smoothing away the creases. You again pitch up and notice the hot iron on your clothes with steam rising up. "Arè! Arè! You are burning my clothes!" This time, almost finished with his work, the dhobi ignores you and carries on. His work done, he now hands your clothes over for your inspection. Are the clothes not bright and clean? Are they not spotless and without any creases? Yet you had felt that he was mishandling your clothes - defiling them, burning them and tearing them to shreds with a batten.

So, as you entrusted your clothes to the dhobi, leaving them in his hands to do as he deemed fit, in the same way you have to entrust yourself to your sheikh, giving yourself into his hands to do with you as he deems fit!

Do you understand the concept? It is important that you do.

ENTRUSTING ONESELF TO ONE'S SHEIKH

So, having done just that, then there should be an end to your knowledge, an end to your intelligence, an end to your past experiences and an end to your opinion - an end to everything. Then only have you entrusted yourself to your sheikh - it is only then that you have given him control over yourself. Thereafter do not take work from your own knowledge, your own intelligence, your own experiences and your own opinion. In comparison to that of your sheikh, what is the value of your knowledge, intelligence, experiences and opinion? Then see what happens! Otherwise nothing will happen. At every point he will object to the sheikh's treatment - the clothes will not get cleaned! If you are unable to comply, then take the clothes away in the same state that you brought them!

Arabic

Entrust yourself over to the masha'ikh as you entrust your clothes to the dhobi .

Say day is day and night is night? No, no, no! What does Sheikh Sadi say? He says, "Do not say so. If it is day and the sheikh says, 'What a dark night it is! Is it night or not?' one's response should be, 'Yes, Huzیr! The stars are twinkling.' Then will one achieve something!"

This is not something that everybody will understand. Those who have only book knowledge will object. To them we say, "Let the matter rest. You just stick to your books! These subtleties are not for you!"

This is manwiyat. Manwiyat is one thing and hessiyat is another.

EXAMPLE OF A GLOW-WORM

Do you know what is a firefly, a glow- worm? Have you seen one? It is an insect that emits a light from its body. The light is visible only at night. During the day the light is not visible. When we were little children we used to catch these and place them in our topis which would then be seen to be glittering through the very thin material. The light is not visible during the day because of the brightness of the sun. So you comment, "What luminescence has it not got!" The next person sees nothing. "Where is the light?" "The light is in it. Look at it at the proper time and you will see it flashing brightly."

So, the sheikh is speaking metaphorically. It is day-time, but kept in it imperceptibly is the darkness of night with the twinkling of stars. In order to reach up to this level of understanding one requires a very high degree of faith and confidence (i'timad and i'tiqad) in one's sheikh. That is why one should select for oneself a sheikh only after a very, very careful scrutiny.

It is also for this reason that Hadhratwala (Hadhrat Thanwi (R.A.) mentioned something very important to me. At times, when we were alone, he used to mention some very intricate points to me. Once - there was nobody else there at the time - one such point he made was, "Procrastinate in making bay't of Molvis, but

hasten in making bay't of the ordinary folk In this way work will progress." This was told to me. What is the reason? A Molvi has a great deal of knowledge. However...

Arabic "Al-ilmo.......

Everything is impermissible in his eyes, "This is na-ja'iz. That is na-ja'iz. This is na-ja'iz. That is na-ja'iz." This is now his life!

ATTAINING KAMAL (PERFECTION)

We were discussing mèlan. The muntahi (the accomplished/ one who has progressed very high), having gone through a process of mujahadah (striving against the nafs) and riyadhat (special spiritual exercises), passes through a stage where it appears that there is no mèlan in his temperament. The same thing happens to one who goes for Haj. When he is in Makkah and he stands in front of the Khanah-Ka'bah he is so affected that he has no mèlan. Surrounding him are pretty women from Egypt, from Iran, from Turkey, from Indonesia, etc. - all these beautiful women are present there - yet he has no mèlan in him. He has lost all power. He feels that he has become impotent. How will he now fulfil conjugal relations when he goes back home? This is a condition that can occur there. Similarly, in sulیk the person is like one held within the Khanah-Ka'bah. When the path of tarbiyet (self-rectification) is tread in the correct manner, the person methodically making his islah, he reaches an intermediary stage when it appears as if he is impotent. There is no mèlan in him whatsoever. That person who has traversed this path will understand this very well. Then, as he progresses to the

stage of accomplishment (intiha) and becomes a muntahi, this is when, in a manner of speaking, his sulیk reaches maturity, so his physical maturity also returns! That is, his mèlan reappears. There is mèlan in his temperament again. This event frightens him. He is shocked: "What is this happening to me?" But the sheikh is there to console him: Do not worry - now you are kamil (reached perfection). Before this stage you still had a deficiency in you. Being without mèlan was a deficiency. Mèlan is a natural instinct. It was completely subdued within you, for whatever reason. The cause of its suppression has been removed and the original, natural attribute is now manifesting itself again. Now you are an imitation of a Nabi! The more one imitates a Nabi in whatever way so, proportionately, does one's kamal (perfection) increases. A wali is subordinate to a Nabi.

Thus, what kamal is it to leave one's wife, to leave one's children, to leave one's work, to leave off associating with others, leave one's town and go and stay in the wilderness? What achievement is this? This is not in keeping with imitating a Nabi. Whereas we are all bound to imitate Nabi Akram sallallahu aliyhi wassallam).

So, a time does come occasionally during the course of the islah of one's nafs, during the course of making an abundance of zikr that one feels like leaving everything and stay in the wilderness. However, Halt! Stop and look to see if this is in imitation of a Nabi . It is not. Therefore, forcefully stop and assess. One should imitate a Nabi. This is a sign of kamal.

Yes, if that time arrives that the Nabi (a.s.) had predicted that your iman is in danger and it becomes difficult to save your iman then take a lamb and place it on your shoulder and go and stay in the crevices of the mountains. And if it is not so, O Salik, having undertaken mujahadah and riyadhat, having listened to people swearing you, being used to light beatings, stay among the people bearing all these abuses! To repeat: Stay where? Stay among the people and tolerate all their abuse.

Did the Sahabah (R.A.) not bear the abuse hurled at them? Yes, for thirteen years they bore patiently the abuse and persecution of others - such abuse and persecution as one will rarely encounter these days.

TOLERATING ABUSE

So, stay among the people and tolerate their abuse. Do not take it badly but be hopeful of being granted elevated stages by Allah ta'ala. Do not become merely sabir (patient) but become subیr (have forbearance). Try and attain the maqam (stage/ level) of subیr. It is to attain this maqam that the sheikh behaves as he does. To the talibe sadiq, one who is pakkah and saccha, he appears to scold without reason. The salik feels, "I have not done anything wrong. I am being scolded for nothing." The sheikh may even order him, "Get out! Be away! Don't show your face here again!" He may even give the salik a thump on his back.

If you unable even to bear the your sheiks's thumping you, as indicated by your response, "What did I do wrong? What did I do wrong?" how will you endure abuse from others? Your response should have been, "Definitely, I did something wrong! Yes, definitely I am at fault even though I am not aware of my error!" This

thump on the back is better than showing affection.

Do you understand the point?

This why this ta'lim (teaching) is taking place. However, that sheikh that will thump the murid on his back does not exist anymore. The point is: When you are unable to tolerate the thump that the sheikh gives you on your back, how will you tolerate the slaps of others when you go outside? The sheikh desires that, at whatever time, whatever difficulty, whatever dishonour befalls you from others, you should consider it to be a draft of sweet halva and swallow it. You should not even think twice about it. This is islah. That is why the sheikh behaves as he does. The sheikh will immediately gauge how much faith and confidence (i'tiqad) you have in him. When there is inner resentment, a feeling of being insulted, at the words of the sheikh and this shows in the expression on his face the sheikh noted it. "Oho! There is still a major deficiency in him."

It is no easy task to remove what is inside one, part of one's nature, part of one's temperament. I am speaking about mèlan. For mèlan not to exhibit itself inappropriately is no ordinary achievement. It is a great feat.

The mu'min has been created to make jihad until the time of his death. This jihad - the jihad against the nafs - is there all the time, for twenty four hours of every day! The physical jihad against the kuffar and mushrikin is an incidental occurrence. Also, that jihad against the kuffar and mushrikin is the fara' (offshoot, subsidiary development) of this jihad against the nafs. The basic jihad is against the nafs.

Just as these bodily garments - this kurtah, ijar and lungi - are the fara' of the garments of taqwa, and taqwa is connected to the heart, as has been explained previously. If this basic taqwa is not present one will remove the kurtah, the ijar or lungi and roam about naked. Inappropriate action. These garments that we are wearing on our bodies are the fara' of the orders of the Shariah. If there were no orders in the Shariah people would have walked around naked. And the orders of the Shariah are connected to taqwa of the heart. So, the garments of the body are the fara' of taqwa of the heart and taqwa of the heart, in turn is the garment of Iman. So, therefore, that person who does not have the garment of taqwa of the heart, his iman is naked. And when his iman becomes naked, bereft of the garment of taqwa, then, at times on certain occasions, he becomes physically naked as well - his kurtah will come off and his ijar will come off.

Do you understand?

That is why in gussah he has become misplaced and inappropriate and his actions will then be inappropriate. He has no taqwa. Yes, if his actions are appropriate then he will take off his kurtah in appropriate circumstances and his ijar will come off in appropriate circumstances. When you go for a ghusl (bath according to the Shariah) to the bathroom you will keep your kurtah and ijar on you? Congratulations! Shabash!3 What type of ghusl will that be? When you prepare for ghusl you will have your clothes on. These garments will be taken off. If not, then why did Hadhrat Mىsa (a.s.) take off his kurtah and place them on a rock when he went to make ghusl? Do you remember the qissah?4 But this fellow here considers himself to be a great muttaqi and therefore wears a lungi even when he makes

ghusl though he is in the bathroom. Ofo! What is the state of your taqwa? Did not Hadhrat Mىsa (a.s.) take off his clothes? Yes, we have permission to take off our clothes when making ghusl.
Do you understand?

This is the answer found in the Hadith sharif: When somebody - Allah forbid! Allah forbid! - is involved in the act of zina (adultery/ fornication) then the iman of this mu'min leaves his heart and hovers above his head like a bird. It is as if at that moment he is not a mu'min. I said, "As if." He has iman, superficial, without quality. It is dry, empty, insipid. That iman that was full of exhilaration, that has disappeared. That garment of taqwa that he had, that has been removed. The protection has been removed and now he is suffering. The iman that remains is dry, tasteless, without flavour, without enjoyment. This is what the Hadith sharif is implying. It is not implying that iman has left him completely and that he has become a kafir (a disbeliever).

The garments inside, the inner clothes, consist of taqwa

Arabic
The best garments are garments of taqwa. The garments on our body are branches of this taqwa. The day this inner taqwa is not present, the clothes on the body will also come off.

Today the talk, the lesson is on mèlan. On this mèlan returning, O Kamil, you are reaching completion (takmil), so, do not have the misconception that you are retrogressing; do not think: "Ofo! I am going backwards! My bad qualities are

returning. All my mujahadah and riyadhat have been for nothing." In you fall into this trap then the whole of sulیk and tasawwuf will become bitter and repulsive. All mujahadah and riyadhat will become loathsome. Take note that only now have you become kamil. This is called the phase of Mujahadah Thaniah. Can you hear me? In the terminology of tasawwuf it is called Mujahadah Thaniah. Now he has reached completion (takmil). He had not reached completion previous to this.

When he has passed through this phase of Mujahadah Thaniah then, he will be on the edge of the sea. Then, the day he decides to proceed into the sea he will be on the sea and in it! Saving himself from sinning, avoiding transgressions of the Shariah, adopting complete and perfect taqwa till his death, he will be a perfect example of the ayet:

Arabic: Yaa ayuhaalazeena aamanu...

O Ye who believe! Fear Allah with fear due to Him and die not except that ye be Muslims. S.3 a.102

TWO TYPES OF TAQWA

It is apparent that the order for the mu'min to adopt taqwa refers to two types of taqwa. The one is that which is merely associated with iman. The taqwa that is demanded in the above ayet is that of abstaining from major and minor sins and also what is doubtful till the time of one's death. This is real taqwa that has been demanded in the ayet quoted above: Complete obedience in one's batin - that is, connected to one's character - and one's zahir.

Mèlan is a natural instinct, part of one's temperament. Kamal is this there is mèlan and one's resolve is not included in it, otherwise there is contamination. Once there is contamination with one's resolve then will come the next step, there is communication. Once this happens then the person has gone out of the sphere of kamale iman. The next step is the desire to fulfil one's passion and then scheming in various ways to do this. Opposing all this is termed Mujahadah Thaniah.

As I was saying that the moment this mèlan occurs the person is assailed by numerous doubts and stray thoughts: these wisawis, takhayulat, khawatir and hadithun-nafs are all from Shaytan:

Arabic Innannajma minas Shaytan....

Allah ta'ala is saying that all these wisawis and khiyalat are from Shaytan in order to cast the mu'min into grief and despondency. Further on Allah ta'ala states:

Arabic: alillaahi.. falwatakkil....
In Allah let the believers place their trust.

COMBATING SHAYTAN

The mu'min should pay no attention to this. Shaytan has no power over the mu'min that he should be influenced by Shaytan. Why? The reason is that the shan (dignified and noble status) of a mu'min is such that he does not place his trust on anything besides Allah ta'ala - he places his complete trust only on Allah ta'ala. This is the demands of his being a mu'min. His reliance is fully on Allah ta'ala. So, why should he become despondent? On the contrary, his response will be challengingly put to Shaytan: "Go ahead! Throw more wisawis! Go on, throw

more - I am not bothered. I will not become despondent." If he does become despondent then Shaytan becomes happy and Allah ta'ala becomes displeased. Remember very well: to become grieved and despondent at the arrival of wisawis is to make Shaytan happy and Rahman unhappy. This is proven from the above ayet. According to the laws of Mantiq (Logic), which you must have studied in several kitabs, that he wishes to make Shaytan happy by remaining despondent and he wishes to displease Rahman by not coming out of his despondency.

So, be happy and not despondent at the arrival of wisawis. Why? Because Allah ta'ala wants you to be happy. Will Shaytan then trouble you? Will he bring doubts into you mind? Will he instil wisawis and scattered thoughts into your mind? Will he play around with your mind? Will he make your temperament turn again and again to the swarm of anxieties racing through your mind? Of course not. So, become firmly grounded while you are here in order that you do not become a plaything for Shaytan. He should not make a plaything of your actions, he should not make a plaything of your deeds and he should not even make a plaything of thoughts in your mind. In the manner shown above. Even if, after this, wisawis do come, just ignore them. This ayet has also in it the remedy for wisawis. Say to yourself, "Why should I become despondent, thereby making Shaytan happy? And thereby bring about the displeasure of Allah ta'ala? Why should I become despondent? I will not become despondent!"

By becoming despondent will a person's mood not be one of depression? The salik who becomes despondent will definitely be depressed. Consequently the pleasure of meeting with associates, the pleasure of eating, the pleasure of sleeping, the

pleasure of studying kitabs, the pleasure of going for lessons, the pleasure of attending classes and listening with enthusiasm - all these come to an abrupt end. This was the very objective Shaytan had. His objective has been achieved. All his necessary duties will be affected adversely. He will not want to go to work. When customers come he will not speak with them in the happy manner that he should. He is depressed. To understand this take the situation where a worldly problem causes one to become depressed: there is some financial loss or some form of disgrace befalls one or some relative passes away, one naturally becomes depressed, one's work is affected and one is unable to sleep restfully. In a similar manner the salik also becomes depressed as a result of all the wisawis that engulf him.

He is now troubled by doubts on the subjects of Tauhid or on Qiyamat or Existence. These thoughts make him depressed. He even comes to question himself, "Have I not become a kafir?" Then something else will bother him: "Shaytan is a kafir and will remain a kafir till the end. Why is this so?" These thoughts now trouble him endlessly. What concern is it of yours? Have you any right to interfere in this affair? Knowingly and intentionally have you any say in the matter? Knowingly and intentionally your iman is intact. This other matter is without any intent, without any say - what is your role in it?

A person wades into the river. Suddenly the current flings him over. Unable to fight the current, he shouts for help: "Help! Help! I'm drowning! I'm drowning!" With these words on his lips he drowns. The Kalimah of La-ilaha illallahu Muhammadur Rasulullah(sallallahu aliyhi wassallam) was not on his lips but the

words "Help! Help! I'm drowning! I'm drowning!" were on his lips. Did he die a mu'min or not? The answer is that he died a mu'min. The reason is that neither on his tongue neither in his heart was there any action deliberately negating iman! He did not deliberately bring any thought contrary to iman into his heart and he did not deliberately bring anything contrary to iman to his tongue, but called out for help. His death is with iman. As long as one does not deliberately bring thoughts negating iman to one's heart or say anything with the tongue contrary to iman one's iman is intact and iman does not slip away.

Do you understand? This mas'alah has been clarified, with the taufiq of Allah ta'ala.

As I was saying, these are issues that the Sufis encounter very much. If they of the haqa'iq (realities and deeper meanings) and masa'il (rules/ laws) of Tasawwuf and they do not possess the knowledge of the haqiqat (reality) of iman then they will have major problems. These issues involving wisawis, khatarat and hadithun-nafs assail the Sufis tremendously, as well as issues concerning paki-napaki (purity and impurity). The Sufis are not troubled by issues concerning halal and haram - these are straightforward issues to them and they are not troubled by wisawis in these matters. If they are afflicted by wisawis then these are to do with paki-napaki or with khiyalat. It is important that these issues are sorted out completely.

PaKi - PURITY

Examples of issues of paki-napaki afflicting the Sufis: He has gone to the toilet and is making istinjah (cleansing himself). Three jugs of water he has used to wash

himself and the namaz (salat) has been completed in the masjid but he still feels he is napak (impure). Then, while still in the toilet, he is concerned about drops of urine. " Oh! There's another drop coming, and another, and another..." He is not getting up. Namaz time is nearly gone but he is not getting out of the toilet! O Allah-ka-bandah (Bondsman of Allah ta'ala), after having finished urinating, shake off the last drop, use the mud-clod to wipe yourself dry and get out from there! Get out, make wudhی (ablution) and make your namaz.

Now, his ijar or lungi is slightly damp, having washed himself with water. If not damp he should wet it. I shall repeat: He should deliberately wet his ijar or lungi so that when he senses a wetness he should tell himself, "It was wet from the water already. It is not a drop of urine dribbling out. It is just the damp edge touching. " Otherwise what will happen is as follows: "Oh! Oh! Another drop of urine has come out!" He then rushes back to wash himself and his garment and make fresh wudhی. Who has him in his grip? Yes, Shaytan!

Do you understand? Do these problems not present themselves? Yes, they do.

Hadhratwala [i.e. Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (r.a.)] told Khwajasahib, "I notice that when you go to the toilet you take rather long. What do you do that it takes you so long?"Khawajasahib replied, "Hadhrat, what can I say? The reason it takes me long is that I feel that drops of urine keep on coming and I have to keep on squeezing until every last drop comes out." Hadhratwala said, "Is that so? It is a cow's udder is it? As long as one squeezes the udder of a cow milk will keep on dripping out. If you keep on squeezing drops will come out. What nonsense is this!

What you do is wipe yourself dry with a mud-clod as soon as you have urinated and come out." This was the remedy for his problem.

This is one set of problems that the Sufis encounter a great deal, wisawis concerning paki-napaki. The other set of problems concern wisawis about issues like Tauhid, Risalat, Qiyamat, hisab-kitab (reckoning), conditions in the grave - Shaytan keeps on heaping wisawis on the Sufi with regard to these issues. Today the remedy is being given to you. The remedy for these wisawis is being presented to you. The remedy for mèlan is being presented to you. A majlis should encompass a variety of subjects. I presented an ayet as proof:

Arabic : innama najma.. Minas Shaytan.....

Shaytan instills wisawis into the hearts of the mu'minin in order to make them despondent. He instils wisawis, khatarat and khiyalat - doubts , scattered thoughts and anxieties - some worry or other is instilled all the time. Immediately tell yourself that this is from Shaytan. Do not become unduly depressed because Rahman is refuting this. One has to make Rahman happy, not Shaytan. When this thought comes to mind then one's despondency should disappear and these thoughts from Shaytan should also disappear. The mind should be clear now and Shaytan can not play around with the mind. There should be sukىn (tranquility). Peace and order (aman) prevails and anarchy and chaos (bid-amani) disappears.

AMAN AND BID-AMANi

This is another aspect that is being brought to your notice. Do you understand what is anarchy and chaos (bid-amani)? This anarchy and chaos is very widespread

these days, not only in Hindustan but all over, throughout the whole world. If you look at America, at China, at Japan, at Russia, at Turkey, at Iran, at Iraq - in fact, wherever you look you will see anarchy and chaos, not only in Hindustan. If you cannot see it ask those who are aware of this. Bid-amani is spread throughout the world. Why is bid-amani widespread? The reason is that bid-amani is rampant within you. Let me repeat what I have just said: this bid- amani, this chaos and anarchy is widespread throughout the world and this is the external manifestation of the chaos and anarchy that is rampant within you. When this bid-amani disappears from within all of you then the bid-amani from the world will also disappear. As long as this bid-amani is within each of you in a collective manner bid-amani will be prevalent. You may try whatever other methods you wish - hold up your banners and march , have demonstrations, hold conferences and pass resolutions, have lectures galore - but bid-amani will not disappear.

Do you understand? This bid-amani will not go away. What do lectures achieve? What do demonstration and marches achieve? With banners in your hands go around shouting "Nare-takbir", what will it achieve? Nothing. Aman (peace and order) will not come because bid-amani (anarchy and chaos) is in every individual

The external bid-amani that is spread all over is an offshoot of the internal bid-amani in the individual. As I have discussed just now, that the garments of the body are a manifestation of the taqwa of the heart. When the taqwa of the heart disappears the clothes from the body will also come off. The outer is a manifestation of the inner. Similarly, the aman that is inside will manifest

externally. When this inner aman goes, the aman on the outside also goes and bid-amani presents itself.

The worst form of bid-amani is kufr. The most odious type of bid-amani is kufr. Kufr predominates in the world whereas iman is scanty. The kuffar are in the majority in the world and the mu'minin are in the minority. Kufr is bid- amani and therefore, the kuffar being in the majority, there is no question of aman becoming established. Let us go a step further: With the existence of bid- amani of kufr the imperceptible bid-amani kufri and mushriki has entered into us as well. Bid-amani has now been enhanced and given dignity! Darkness is now overpowering and overwhelming.

You brothers may not have seen that age, but we have several times seen the raging of tremendous storms not once but several times. At times, just before Asr, while the sun is still shining, a severe storm would blow up. The whole sky would be filled with thick clouds which would cover the sun completely. It would become so dark that one could not even see one's fingers in front of one. Yet, the sun is shining beyond the clouds! However, it has become so dark that the day is darker than night itself!

Do you understand? Bid-amani has become widespread: the sun is shining - the light of aman (peace and order) is there - but the darkness of bid-amani has overpowered this light, as at the times of storms, and the whole world is covered by darkness!

In a similar way there is bid-amani within us and this bid-amani has enveloped our

entire inner being and has overpowered the light within us. So, there is no question of radiance and aman manifestation themselves.

Another aspect: there is shirk-e-khafi and shirk-e-jali (minor and major shirk). Minor shirk has joined up with major shirk, resulting in darkness existing in all the four corners of the earth. These are the effects of bid-amani, this is how it has spread. There is no question of aman prevailing.

That is why nothing will be achieved by lectures and speeches, by conferences, by demonstrations, by strikes, by banner-waving and sit-downs in front of various institutions. All these methods are completely and absolutely contrary to the Orders of Allah ta'ala. Adopting these contrary methods and hoping for peace and order...? It will never happen! The reason is that the Rules laid down by Ahkamul-Hakimin (Allah ta'ala) for attaining peace and order (aman) are different. So, there is no question of aman prevailing if methods are adopted contrary to these Rules. In essence, aman has to come within oneself.

There is a fourth aspect I wish to deal with. The above was a discussion concerning Aman-e-am (peace and order in the world). What I wish to stress is: be concerned about yourself. Have fikr (concern) for yourself. Do not concern yourself about others. Do not make fikr for others. Shift your gaze away from fikr about others and concentrate on yourself. Where have you fallen into in the fikr for others? Worry about yourself. That is, establish aman within yourself. With the intention of establishing aman within yourself on an individual basis, get to work. Whatever traits that are causing bid-amani within yourself, remove them. Take takabbur

(arrogance) - if this is present within one will this not cause bid-amani? Take gussah (anger/ rage) - is this not a cause of bid-amani? Take hasad (jealousy) one for another - is this not a cause of bid-amani? Take kinah (malice) in one's heart one for another - is this not a cause of bid-amani? To have hirs and tama'(greed and avarice) for others' possessions - is this not a cause of bid-amani? To have the desire within one that the honour and wealth that others possess should be destroyed - is this not a cause of bid-amani? Takabbur, gussah, hasad, etc., etc., all these qualities will cause aman or bid- amani? Take, for example, I made ghibat about you - I said something unpleasant about you to somebody. This conversation of mine has now reached your ears. Having heard this will you have affection for me or enmity? If you had muhabbat for me will it remain or disappear? Is there now aman or bid- amani? There is now bid-amani. The question of aman prevailing does not arise at all. This is something that is within me: takabbur, gussah, hirs, tama' hasad, ghibat, nafrat, bugz and a host of other traits, if all these exist within me, will there be aman? No question of it!

ELECTIONS

Take voting. What is it if it is not animosity? Two individuals confront one another. The one stands as a candidate in opposition to another for election. Will the one not criticise the other? Will the one not take money or give money to get as many votes as possible? Will the one not try to belittle the other? Will the result not be enmity instead of muhabbat? And hearts are not pure. Take it that an effort has to be made and an effort was made. The one has been successful and is elected as the leader. The previous mayor has been defeated. What happens now? The ones

that did not vote for the successful candidate and voted for the one who lost, are now in danger. The next is that there is a fight over the allocation of land. Legal cases are instituted for the return of land allotted previously, and so forth. Will there be friendship or animosity? Is there aman or bid-amani?

What should have happened at the time of the contest was the following: The attitude should have been, "If I win well and good. If I lose, it will not make difference to my friendship." There should have been no change in the muhabbat the one has for the other. There should have been no attempts to cause harm to the other person. There should have been no moves to humiliate and disgrace the other person. There should be no hounding of the other. But this is exactly what we see. You villagers who are present here - do you not bear me out in what I am saying? Of course you do. The ones who did not vote for the one elected are put into difficulties.

Why is all this? It is because the illnesses that should not have been there are present: Takabbur, hasad, kinah, etc. He thus wants to retaliate and cause him difficulties. The one wants to provoke the other and cause him problems.

GENERAL PEACE AND ORDER (AMAN-E-aM)

When these illnesses are eliminated from within then you will see its external manifestation: sukیn and aman (tranquility, peace and order) will establish themselves plainly, fully and completely. Therefore, why are you pursuing aman-e-am when this is beyond your ikhtiyar (control and jurisdiction)? However, as for yourself you can fulfil the haq (right) that is incumbent on yourself, that you can

tell yourself, "The causes of bid-amani that dwell within me I shall remove." The terms applied to this process are Sulیk and Tasawwuf. You can tell yourself, "This takabbur that is within me I shall remove. What have I to do with the whole universe? I have not taken responsibility for the whole world."

ARABIC lista alyhim........
Thou art not at all a warder over them.

Therefore, on an individual basis establish aman within yourselves. Bas! - That is sufficient. The proof of this is clearly indicated in another ayet of the Qur'an Sharif. Allah ta'ala addresses each one on an individual basis:

Ya alahillazena aamanu alaikum anfusukum........

O ye who believe! Ye have charge of your own souls. He who erreth cannot injure you if ye are rightly guided. S.5. a.105

Allah ta'ala is saying, "Why are you worried about others? Worry about yourself. What is this you are saying, 'Our society is such.'" Allah ta'ala is negating this misconception. He is Knower of the unseen (alimul-gaib) and He knew people will say, "What can I say? Regretfully, our society is like this. What is there to say? Hadhrat, our environment is like this. What can we do?" You also must have heard people saying this. "Society is such. The circumstances are such. What can we do?" In negating this misconception Allah ta'ala is saying in the Qur'an Sharif that 'society" is with you. The environment is what you make of it. Just what are you saying?

Ya alahillazena aamanu alaikum anfusukum

O you who believe! The whole world has not been made your responsibility. You have not been made the policeman of the world. Worry about yourself. Do not worry about others. It should not happen that in safeguarding the next person's bundle (of goods) yours get stolen or destroyed! You protect your own bundle. The world is full of deception, especially nowadays. Did you not hear of what happened? Let me relate to you:

DECEPTION - AN INCIDENT

This poor person was sitting in the train. Another person, carrying a bundle, came and placed the bundle down next to him and said, "I'll leave my bag here. I'm going to buy my train ticket. I'll be back in a moment." He left to buy a ticket. Here the train started moving and he was not back. (Listen carefully. We also used to listen to Hadhratwala. In it is a lesson on how to live a life with caution.) The train departed without the second person who had left his bundle with the first person. Shortly the ticket inspector arrived. "Tickets please! Tickets please!" The passengers produced their tickets for him to check. He came to this person to check his ticket as well. He saw the bundle on the floor and asked, "What's this?" This person answered, "Sir, another person came and left it here, saying that he had still to buy his ticket. I don't know what happened to him." The ticket inspector spoke sarcastically, "Oh, you don't know what happened to him? But this bundle is by you! Open it!" he ordered commandingly. This person opened the bundle. What was inside? The body of a murdered man! Wrapped in some cloth was the dismembered corpse of a murdered man! He was arrested.

Did he not take responsibility for the bundle which the other person had left behind? Was he not deceived by the other person who said that he was just going to buy a train ticket?

Do you understand? These are the times we are living in. These are times of great fitnah (trials). This is an age of massive deception, of tremendous tricksters. Our naivety is being exploited. The response of the first person should have been: "I do not take responsibility for it. Place your bundle elsewhere. Go, put it some other place. I'm not keeping it by me."

We come to know that a great deal of affection and compassion shown in inappropriate places are going to cause tremendous harm. This explains what "environment" is! A person shows undue compassion, he shows softness. He makes friends - inappropriately. The next thing is "his bundle is missing"! This is the way we express it in our local Urdu. In protecting the next person's bundle, your bundle is swiped.

Arabic (repeat of above)

Do not do such a thing that in protecting the other person's bundle, yours goes missing. This is the plain and simple translation of the ayet.

Arabic: Laadurru.............

When you know the straight path - when you know, with firmness and conviction, the road you have to travel to get to your destination - then will you be deceived by anybody's deception? Then, even if the whole world were to be astray and you are

on guidance, the whole universe will not cause you any harm. It is sufficient that you concern yourself about your own condition. Leave aside the environment and society. Keep a close scrutiny on yourself. Have fikr for yourself - be concerned about yourself. You have not been created for the concern of the whole universe. What will be the result when you have the fikr for others? The fikr for yourself will not remain. You will suffer some harm. Haq Bari Ta'ala is alimul-gaib - He is aware of the passage of fifteen hundred years and its consequences. He has shown that "society" is nothing; "environment " is nothing. "Society"is what you are; "environment" is what you are. Look at yourself.

Ya ayullazeena aa manu alakum anfosukum
Mount your nafs

"Ala" denotes mounting something. One will hear it said, "The burden of debt is on me. I have such a big burden of debt on me that I cannot bear it!" This is not a physical burden but it is a manner of speaking. The burden that each has to bear is different.

So, the "ala" denotes mounting. Does one not mount a horse? The ayet commands us, "O mu'min, mount your nafs." Each one should mount his nafs, his tabiyet, his temperament. From the grammatical point of view when the collective term is utilised in confrontation with another it denotes 'each by itself'. (Those of you sitting here and who have studied grammar will know this.) This means that each one of you should mount your nafs, that is, gain control of it, like a well-trained horse, that with a slight tap with one's heel the horse will jump over the ditch.

Keep a tight control of the reins. Why? Because, at times even a trained horse will become frisky. Similarly, this nafs which you have mounted, may also become frisky occasionally. Therefore, do not give it free rein, do not be neglectful, do not let go of the reins. This is what "ala" means. Be mounted and in full control. Do not be neglectful of it.

You will have understood from this ayet that there is no reason for saying, "What can I say? Society is such. The environment is like that. I am working in an office with a variety of other people. Some are rude, some like to tease, others are playful and so forth. What can I do? Society is such. The environment is such." Is this not heard from people? Another example: "I have been admitted to the madrasah, but the majority of students is such, the environment is such. The environment of the room in which I am staying is such. What can I say? The environment is such."

I am trying to make you understand. The environment is not something to be frightened about. Look at the environment as you would at your mother.5 Should one be terrified of one's mother? Staying with one's mother will a person become corrupted? At times she may have slapped you, not out of enmity but for the sake of disciplining. She may have shouted at you, reprimanded you but not of enmity. A little while later does she not call out to you lovingly?

STUDENTS' BEHAVIOUR

I am trying to make you children understand. You are staying in your room in the "boarding" (hostel) together with others. An argument and fight may occur. Children tend to argue and fight. You are slapped. Now, think of the persons in

your room as your mother. So, who has hit you? Your mother! So, what is there to be concerned about? Do not retaliate, do not fight back. Just accept it. In fact, think of the advice Hadhrat Luqman (a.s.) gave his son. It is in the Qur'an Sharif. He told his son, "Just see, when somebody slaps you on the face, do not turn your face away." By this he meant that by not turning your face away you should invite him to slap you again! Do not fight back. Each one is your mother. If this is every student's attitude, will there be fights? Will there fisticuffs and beatings? Obviously not.

If there are fights then it shows that the environment is not good - there is no aman within yourselves and that is the reason for the arguments and fights. If you had entered the madrasah with aman or imbibed aman within you after entering, then there would be no fights and arguments. There will be glitter in the room and an end to fighting and quarreling.

MURIDiN'S BEHAVIOUR

What of those who come to stay in the khanqah? After coming to stay in the khanqah there is just no question of feeling upset at anybody telling you off. Why have you come here? You have come for this very reason that, "Even if somebody were to take a basketful of faeces and throw it on me I will not take it badly!" This is the intention with which you left and came here to stay in the khanqah for your islah and tarbiyet. This is the resolve and determination with which you came that, "Even if somebody were to take a basketful of faeces and throw it on me I will not let anger (gussah) overtake me!" This is the objective with which you came here. And if you had no such notion in your mind, this is the ta'lim (teaching) that is

now placed in front of you that if filth was thrown on you why should you feel upset? If you are feeling upset then it means that there is still some deficiency in you! Your islah has not been achieved. There is still some deficiency. The sheikh will remove this deficiency so that, when you leave the khanqah and go back home to your neighborhood, to your town, to your country, whenever anybody does any such thing which is contrary to your temperament, there will no possibility of anger overtaking you. This is what the sheikh wants to mold you into and send you back, seeing you have come as a talibe sadiq. When the internal environment is corrected then the outside environment will also be corrected. Remember: the whole world has not been made your responsibility. Nobody will influence you because you have corrected your environment.

This is what Allah ta'ala is saying. I am merely conveying His proclamation to you:

ARABIC (Repeat of above)

When this is the case the whole universe can be astray but nobody will be able to corrupt you.

THE EXAMPLE OF THE SAHaBAH (r.a.)

The internal environment of the Sahabah-Kiram (R.A.) was extremely firm, therefore the external environment was not frightening to them. As is well-known there were approximately a hundred and twenty four thousand Sahabah (r.a.) that Rasulullah(sallallahu aliyhi wassallam) left behind when he passed away. Also, as is well-known, there were approximately one hundred and twenty four thousand Ambiya (a.s.) that came. Thus each Sahabi (r.a.) is similar to each Nabi of theirs.

And why not? Each Sahabi (r.a.) was an 'alim and the 'ulama are comparable to the Ambiya (a.s.) of the Bani Isra'il. Thus all the Sahabah (r.a.) are comparable to the Ambiya (a.s.) of the Bani Isra'il.

Now look at their environment, what were its challenges: Diamonds were strewn in front of them in the battlefields on the occasion of jihad. They were tempted with gold placed along their paths that they should fall prey to hirs and tama' (greed and avarice). As part of their scheming, the Christians hand- picked exquisitely beautiful and tantalizing young Christian girls who were given goods to sell and sent among the Sahabah (r.a.) mujahidin with specific instructions from the Pope to try and seduce them in a plot to demoralize the Sahabah (r.a.). If the girls were in any way interfered with, the Christians knew the Sahabah (r.a.) would be defeated. If the girls were not interfered with and not even looked at, then who can overcome such a nation? Both aspects were assessed by the Christians - zar and zan (women and wealth). The Sahabah (r.a.) did not lift their eyes at the gold and best of diamonds strewn in front of them. Wealth is something one naturally inclines to, yet the Sahabah (r.a.) were indifferent to it. The Christians said to themselves, "These people seem to be very firm." Now we come to zan: The Pope then instructed that beautiful, hand-picked girls should be given goods to sell and sent among the Sahabah (r.a.). The girls flaunted themselves among the Sahabah (r.a.) but no one lifted his eyes at them. The reason is that their environment was corrected. (To use the metaphor above: They took the environment to be their "mother" so what fear is there? Is it permissible to look at one's mother with evil intent?)Time and again the girls passed between them but nobody looked. Finally,

the girls went back to report back their failure. The Pope assessed the position: First was the zan - the material wealth with which they were tempted; second was the zan - the women with whom they were tempted. The Sahabah (r.a.) did not lift their eyes at either. He concluded that the Christians would never be successful in overcoming the Sahabah (r.a.). These are the very two things, zan and zar! It was apparent to the Pope that the Sahabah (r.a.) were not fighting for land to fill their material greed and desires but were fighting for the land for the Din of Allah ta'ala.

Do you understand? Going for jihad for conquer this land, this sultanate, this kingdom, was not for the sake of hirs of the land, not for greed of the land but for the purity of the land! Their gaze was neither on zar; nor was their gaze on zan; nor was their gaze on zamin (land) - how could anybody overcome them? That is the reason why the Sahabah (r.a.) were successful. Why? The basis was that they had taken their inner environment with them. They feared nothing from the external environment. They had full control over their nafs; they had full domination over their temperaments. This is Tasawwuf! This is Sulىk - an important part of the shari'at, a delicate and exquisite part of the shari'at.

This is the reason for you honoured guests have journeyed here.

DU'A

May Allah ta'ala grant us all the taufiq to remove the qualities of hirs and desires for zar, zan and zamin from within; that our inner condition, our inner environment becomes corrected; that aman be established within ourselves and outside as well.

May Allah ta'ala grant sahih taufiq.

Khuda Hafiz.

Chapter No.:

16

FOREWORD

Al-hamdulillah, this fourteenth booklet is ready for publication. This, again, is solely through the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of our Sheikh, Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Masihullah Khan Sahib (Hadhratji) (RA).

While preparing this translation, the thought came to mind as to the correctness and appropriateness of choosing this particular majlis (discourse) for publication. In other words, the past issues had covered most of the basic concepts dealing with islah (self-rectification), and the chances are that, from now onwards, many aspects may be repeated and duplicated. It so happened that we came across some statements of Hadhratji (RA), noted down by Mufti Rashid Ahmed Mewati sahib in his recent compilation, "Waqiyat Masihul-Ummat", which are worth repeating here. Hadhratji (RA) stated, "Many discourses have taken place (and) many talks have been listened to. Now it only remains for Nafs and Shaytan to be given a kick! Are you listening? With the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of my Hadhrat, various topics have been discussed Al-hamdulillah, and have reached your ears. Now it is necessary to merely boot out Nafs and Shaytan. Nafs is the King of Evil, and Shaytan is his Prime Minister. Is this (advice) not sufficient as a discourse, or not yet?" In these few words Hadhratji (RA) has given us the crux of

the whole discourse. Whatever else follows is merely to guide us and strengthen us in pursuing these objectives.

In this majlis that has been translated, Hadhratji (RA) discusses some important aspects of Suluk that the serious talib needs to be acquainted with. May Allah Ta'ala give us all the tawfiq arzani to do this.

Dr. I.M

E-mail: imangera@cybertrade.co.za

Bismillah

TAQWA

TAZKIYAH AND TAZAKKI

In grammar and syntax there are two chapters: One is taf'il and the other is tafa'ul. After taf'il comes tafa'ul. The difference is in the root word. In a similar manner one finds tazkiyah and tazakki. Tazkiyah is in the category of taf'il, and tazakki is in the category of tafa'ul. Allah Ta'ala states at one place in the Qur'an Sharif:

قَدْ أفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

Successful are those who have made tazkiyah of their nafs. (91:9)

At another place Allah Ta'ala has stated:

قَدْ أفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى () وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى

Successful are those whose tazkiyah has taken place and has made the zikr of the name of their Rabb, and have then made salat. (87:14-15)

From this it is apparent that tazkiyah takes place by making zikr and performing namaz (salat). Allah Ta'ala has mentioned both zikr and namaz together and has mentioned both after tazakki: وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى

And if a person is making zikr and performing namaz as well, but his tazkiyah is not taking place, then these actions have as their bases the coveting of dunya (materialism) - the effects of these are part of the love of dunya:

بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّ

But you are desiring dunya. (87:16)

NIFAQ AND IKHLAS

People come and just sit here, but one should assess one's niyyet (intention) as well. It is based on this niyyet that - from the side of Allah Ta'ala - results will accrue. Otherwise, one will remain where one is. It is even possible that one may retrogress: Initially, there was sincerity (ikhlas); now there is hypocrisy (nifaq). Initially, he had good aqidah (faith and confidence); now he has become bid-aqidah (mistrustful). So, why should such a person come and sit here? Most probably there is some expediency. Remember: If this nifaq is not turned (into ikhlas) this nifaq will be openly revealed finally.

C.I.D.

Some are C.I.Ds as well. Do C.I.Ds exist or don't they exist? Yes, they are to be found all over. To recognise them is difficult. One also finds such C.I.Ds who are not appointed by the government, but they are C.I.Ds. Just see: those munafiqin

(hypocrites) who attended the gatherings of Huzur Akram (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)--were they appointed by the government? Of course not! They became C.I.Ds by their own will. If they noticed what, in their opinion, were any shortcomings in anybody, they would tell others. They would publicise these. The shortcomings that these C.I.Ds used to narrate to others, in reality, were not shortcomings. In their eyes, however, these were shortcomings because they were munafiqin. The reason is that they had no i'tiqad and aqidah in their temperaments. They used to publicise such matters which, superficially, were apparently contrary to justice, whereas, viewing the matter in-depth, there were many considerations and also wisdom in them. There were many such incidents.

AN INCIDENT

One such incident is narrated:

Huzur Akram's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) majlis was in progress. The place was full. The majlis was fully attended. Just then the Ashabe-Badarin came. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), out of consideration for the Ashabe-Badarin, requested some of the Sahabah (RA) to sit closer together. Some he told, "You have listened to quite a few talks. Now give the veterans of Badr an opportunity." The devoted Sahabah (RA) immediately obeyed and stood up and went away. The munafiqin found an ideal opportunity to criticise this action. "What justice is this that those who were seated from beforehand are removed and newcomers are given their places?" At this, Allah Ta'ala revealed the following ayet:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا فِي الْمَجَالِسِ فَافْسَحُوا يَفْسَحِ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۖ وَإِذَا قِيلَ انْشُزُوا فَانْشُزُوا يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

O ye who believe! When it is said unto you: ‘Make room in your assemblies', then make room; Allah will make room for you. And when it is said: ‘Rise up', then rise up; Allah will exalt those who believe among you and those who are vouchsafed knowledge, in degrees. And Allah is aware of whatsoever ye work. (58:11)

In this incident Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had displayed the utmost wisdom and discretion for the following reasons: It is a rational rule that in a situation where there is no room in a gathering, the rule of "sunawib-fil-istfadah" - taking turns in attaining benefit - will be applied, that the first gathering is terminated so that a second gathering be given an opportunity to benefit. Thus, there was no fault in this action, but because of the hypocrisy (nifaq), this very wise action appeared to be unjust to the munafiqin who publicised it to others. So, had they become C.I.Ds or not?

We come to understand from this that there are also C.I.Ds attending a majlis. They will tell others that today's majlis had such and such a deficiency in it, whereas this is not the case. However, people accept the superficial very quickly, because they do not know the reality behind it. Take this example: A particular incident has been related from two different angles. The Sheikh narrates it from one aspect. Somebody else has heard the other version and he feels that the Sheikh has made a mistake in his description of the incident, whereas this is not the case. The Sheikh is relating the incident based on his knowledge.

Now, there may be this other person who may have heard the other version, or may have read another version in some kitab, so he goes around telling people that the story is not the way that the Sheikh had related it, but is different, and even shows the kitab. But this is no proof of the falsity of the Sheikh's statements, because the incident has been related in several ways.

In the same way, a portion of an ayet comes to the lips and not the full ayet. This C.I.D then goes around saying that the full ayet is thus. This person is an element of the C.I.D. He is a C.I.D in himself, but not appointed on behalf of the government. (This is a new perspective.) Even then, I speak with caution. I do not speak on mere conjectures. At times, I am convinced of something, but then too I exercise caution, because my memory is much weaker, whereas my memory used to be excellent. When I was studying at Darul 'Uloom (Deoband) I used to do revision of the kitabs in this manner: I used to close my eyes and then visualise that this particular subject runs from this page to this particular page; that this other subject extends from this page to this particular page; that such-and-such scholar has this to say; the other scholar has that to say; the school of thought of this person is this; and the school of thought of that person is that, etc. Now my retentive memory has weakened, and that is why I speak haltingly and hesitatingly.

THREE ACTIVITIES REQUIRED FOR TAZKIYAH: TILAWAT, ZIKR & SALAT

To continue on the topic of tazkiyah:

Shah Abdul Aziz sahib (RA) saw Hadhrat Ali (RA) in a dream and asked, "What was the method of Suluk and tazkiyah in your era?" Hadhrat Ali (RA) replied, "In our age Suluk and tazkiyah took place by means of three activities: tilawat (recitation of the Qur'an Sharif), zikr and salat."

Now we see only zikr - there is an abundance of zikr - whereas the following ayet mentions all three:

اتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا
تَصْنَعُونَ

Recite that which hath been inspired in thee of the Scripture, and establish worship. Lo! worship preserveth from lewdness and iniquity, but verily remembrance of Allah is more important. (29:45)

Thus, for tazkiyah, all three are necessary. Now there is an abundance of zikr, but there are shortcomings in tilawat and iqamatis-salat. In essence, for Suluk - i.e. to develop qurbe-Ilaha (closeness to Allah Ta'ala) - there is need for two things: continuous obedience (dawame-ta'at) [to the Shariat] and an abundance of zikr (kathrate-zikr). Now, in obedience (ta'at) there should be continuity, but as far as zikr is concerned, there should be abundance, but continuity is not a necessity. The reason is that there is just no question of one being outside the scope of ta'at (obedience to the Shariat) at any time, on any occasion and under any circumstances: when engaged in conversation there is ta'at; when looking at somebody there is ta'at; when silent there is ta'at. In activity there is ta'at and in

tranquillity there is also ta'at. There is just no question of being free of ta'at. So, as far as ta'at is concerned, there is continuity.

However, in zikr there is no continuity. Under normal circumstances, continuity is impossible. When one is occupied in some activity and absorbed in it, then normally the zikr will terminate - but zikr will be embedded in the heart. The continuity of obedience (dawame-ta'at) mentioned above is the effect of this zikr embedded in the heart, termed zikre-qalbi. Yes, what is embedded in the heart is the basic remembrance.

IMAN AND ITS DEMANDS

Take Iman: Basically, Iman is composed of tasdiqe-qalbi and the iqrar-billisan - conviction and confirmation in the heart, and attesting verbally the Kalimah Tayyibah. The verbalising (iqrar-billisan) is the interpretation of the conviction and confirmation of what is in the heart (tasdiqe-qalbi). This verbal attestation is not a continuous process. Only when somebody asks, will the person recite لا الـــــه الا الله محمـــد رســول الله, but Iman is embedded in the heart all the time.

The "eradication" of the Akhlaqe-razilah is, in actual fact, a lessening and subjugation, which is close to elimination. (For example, if we take the recitation of the Qur'an Sharif, and we take the word "majraha" when a similar type of diminution takes place, it is recited as "mahreha", the original vowel - a - changes but some slight hint of the original still remains.) However, the objective as far as the a'male batinah is concerned, is attaining the Akhlaqe-hamidah on an established and permanent basis.

ZIKR - DIRECT AND INDIRECT

In the category of zikr are included tilawat of the Qur'an Sharif, and all those azkar [pl. of zikr] besides tilawat. At times this zikr is direct and at times it is indirect. If we were to include the indirect forms of zikr also as zikr itself, then we can say that there should be permanence (dawam) in zikr as well. The basis for saying this is the Hadath Sharif that says:

كل مطيع لله فهو ذاكر

Every obedient servant is one making zikr.

On the general, wider meaning of this Hadath Sharif, one can state that permanent zikr is also an objective.

What is meant by indirect zikr? It is the following: Whichever act or deed at whichever time, that Allah Ta'ala has commanded us to carry out, to stick to it within the boundaries and rules, with sincerity (ikhlas). To adhere to this is also an objective. Thus, when both direct and indirect zikr are generally applicable, then it is apparent that dawame-zikr is also an objective. So, both dawame-zikr and dawame-ta'at are objectives. However, there is this difference that dawame-ta'at is an objective in its direct form, whereas dawame-zikr is an overall objective, whether it is in its direct form or indirect form.

ZIKR - SETTING PRIORITIES

When one is involved in some ta'at - when in that condition where one is occupied by that particular deed - there will occur a lessening of one's attention towards

Allah Ta'ala in one's heart. On such occasions precedence will be given to concentration on the performance of the deed (ta'at). The reason for this is the following rule: When two tasks present themselves at the same time, and one is unable to delay either one of the two, then the more important task will be given preference. Proof of this is to be found in the statement of Hadhrat 'Umar (RA): "Ajhar jaishi wa ana fis-salaat. - I work out the strategy of my army and I am in namaz." Two ibadat confront Hadhrat 'Umar Faruq (RA): Firstly, to perform namaz with full concentration - there can be no doubt that this is ibadat - and, secondly, to work out a strategy for the army. This is also ibadat because a'laa' kalimatullah (elevating the Kalimah of Allah Ta'ala), when confronting the kuffar, is dependent on being victorious, and is normally dependent on giving the army a strategy for battle. Thus, working out a battle strategy is also ibadat. As the army had already been dispatched to fight, now in namaz, his mind drifted to this task. So, two ibadats presented themselves simultaneously - performance of namaz with full concentration and working out a military strategy - with the latter being more important at that moment in time. In carrying out the official duties of running the state, Hadhrat 'Umar (RA) did not find the time to work out his military strategy, which task required tranquillity and peace of mind. This he attained while performing namaz, which was necessary and important. This is the reason for him giving priority to this task.

In a similar manner, zikre-qalbi and concentration in ta'at, are both ibadat, but at the time of performing the task at hand, the concentration in one's zikre-qalbi

becomes diminished. It is now over-shadowed and the concentration on the ta'at becomes dominant.

In the same way once Hadhrat 'Umar (RA) was reciting a Khutbah [i.e. delivering a sermon]. During the course of the recital something unrelated to the topic in the Khutbah, was said by him. Those listening were surprised and perplexed that, while reciting the Khutbah, he was saying, "O Sariyah! (Guard yourself at) the mountain! O Sariyah! (Guard yourself at) the mountain!" What had actually happened was the following: Hadhrat Sariyah (RA) had been dispatched for jihad. At that particular moment in time Hadhrat 'Umar (RA) became aware, through kashf (whereby an unseen event becomes known) that the enemy was about to overwhelm him. Hadhrat 'Umar (RA) called out that he should take a position so that the mountain would protect him from the rear. Hadhrat 'Umar's (RA) voice reached the ears of the Muslim army by way of a miracle (karamat). The army immediately did this and the enemy was repulsed.

Just see, the Khutbah was an act of ta'at, such an act of obedience that without the Khutbah the Jumu'ah namaz is not valid. Even if the Khutbah is read, but is read after the Jumu'ah namaz, then too, the Jumu'ah namaz is still not valid. In this instance Hadhrat 'Umar (RA) inserted an important ta'at into another act of ta'at and did not delay till the completion of the namaz because it was of utmost urgency and importance.

In any case, zikr is generally and in common language, associated with verbal zikr, just as when the Kalimah is mentioned one normally takes it to refer to the

Kalimah Tayyibah. Similarly, when one mentions zikr, generally and in the eyes of ordinary people, it is considered to be zikre-lisana (verbal or vocalised zikr). And zikre-qalbi is that zikr that is embedded in the heart. The next person is not aware of this condition, but this is the basic zikr. However, at the time of ta'at even zikre-qalbi is diminished. This means that concentration towards it is not maintained. One should not be concerned about this and one should maintain one's concentration towards the ta'at, as has been mentioned كل مطيع لله فهو ذاكر.

ZIKR - LITTLE EQUATED TO A LOT

From here I wish to state something else: Some people, because of their involvement in necessary Deeni duties or necessary personal duties, are deprived of making an abundance of zikr. They then feel grieved and frustrated that they are unable to make zikr in abundance. To them I convey the good news that their minimal zikr is equivalent to an abundance of zikr of others. This is on the basis of what has been said now that dawame-ta'at is an indirect form of dawame-zikr. Similarly, that person involved in necessary Deeni and personal duties, who has time for only a minimal amount of zikr, would fall in the category of one making an abundance of zikr.

In case anybody has a doubt as to how a little zikr can be equated with an abundance of zikr, the answer is as follows: When anything is done on a daily basis in a small quantity, over a period of time it accumulates into a big amount. So that little zikr that is made punctually and daily must accumulate into a large amount as well. Can there be any other the result?

Some may have the thought that rather than making a little zikr daily, it is better to sit somewhere for a few days and make an abundance of zikr and then stop. But how can this be termed an abundance? This is the same as sitting down to eat a great amount of food for a few days and then to stop eating for the next three to four days! Will this be eating in abundance? Nothing of the sort! Take another person who eats a little food everyday - will this amount eventually to a little or a great amount? Obviously, it will be a great amount. He will remain healthy.

Hadhrat Abdur-Rahman bin Auf (RA) was a wealthy Sahabi. Someone asked him, "How did you become so wealthy?" He replied, "In my business I take care that I do not give on credit but I take cash, and I take minimal profits. Which kind of business is it that it shows no profit? However, compared to other businessmen, I take a smaller profit and that is why my business flourishes." So, this small profit, on account of the larger business, becomes great. This is how he became wealthy. What appeared small became big. Take somebody else who is taking big profits. Soon the customers come to realise this. They tell themselves, "Why should we not buy from where the owner is taking small profits? Why pay six paisa when we can buy the same item for four paisa?"

Have you understood this illustration? In the same way the meagre verbal zikr of the occupied talibe-tazkiyah - the seeker of self-rectification who is very busy with necessary duties - is no less in his thawab (reward) and qurb (closeness to Allah Ta'ala) than that person who is making zikr in abundance. If the rewards are not less then why be grieved? Why have you brought this illness on yourself? There is a saying: What remedy can there be for the grief brought on by yourself? One

should have faith and confidence (i'timad and i'tiqad) on somebody. When one comes to sit in a majlis then the proper and correct manner of sitting is that in which there is complete and full i'timad and i'tiqad. With the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of my Sheikh [Hadhratwala (RA)], if one has proper i'timad and i'tiqad on what I have just narrated, then there will be serenity and tranquillity, otherwise it will be the very same situation: What remedy can there be for the grief brought on by yourself? The illness has been self-inflicted.

Do you understand?

As I was saying: Just as is the case with dawame-ta'at, that the Mu'min bandah (believing bondsman) is at all times in some ibadat, it is the same with dawame-zikr - he is always in zikr, sometimes directly, at other times indirectly. This discourse is for those salikin who are sincere (mukhlis) and truthful (sadiq), who are involved in their tazkiyah with ikhlas and sidq. These individuals become despondent very quickly: "Today I only made zikr one thousand times instead of three thousand times." They continuously ponder over this and become despondent. Of course the proviso is that - seeing you are a talib - the obstacle is not laziness. It should not be that only laziness prevents you. If that is the case - that laziness is not a factor - then how can there be any question of ‘a little' or ‘a lot'? There is no question of ‘meagre' and ‘abundance'. Sometimes it is diminished and at other times it is abundant, and the amount that is meagre is actually an abundant amount. If this is the case, then, in reality, the qurb and thawab that is attained by abundance, the same qurb and thawab will be attained by the small amount of zikr.

Do you understand? Maybe not. Here is an example:

On a particular day a person makes tilawat to the amount of four chapters of the Qur'an Sharif. On another occasion he manages only one chapter - he is greatly troubled by flatulence and passing of wind; or he is rundown; or he is unable to stand or sit (due to illness, etc.); at times his mouth is dry, even when he lies down. Yet, he is a talib. He has a tremendous passion. Now, who is going to console him? For him to console himself is difficult. It is essential for such a person to appoint a dependable person - one on whom he has i'timad and i'tiqad - to advise him, otherwise life is going to become difficult for him. Just see: If a person wishes to travel somewhere, and he is not fully aware and absolutely certain of the route to take, but only has some vague idea, then it is absolutely essential for this traveller to ascertain the correct directions along the route, even though he does not appoint a guide. The person he should ask should be somebody who is well-acquainted with the route and is travelling there. Our traveller should have full confidence in him and ask him from time to time. It is not necessary to appoint him as a guide - that is that one should formally make somebody one's sheikh - but one should have i'timad on somebody and consult him.

CONSULTATION: A RULE OF TARIQAT

That is why it is a mas'alah (rule) of taraqat (Tasawwuf) that, if one's sheikh has passed away, and one is a Khalifah or Sheikh himself - that is, he has been given permission by the deceased Sheikh to make others bay't - if this Khalifah now comes across some problem that causes him anxiety or uneasiness, then he should

seek a solution from whatever advice his Sheikh may have given (in his lifetime). Despite this, if his problem is not solved, and in order to obtain greater reassurance on the matter by consulting somebody, he should consult one of his own Khalifas - one with whom he has some degree of informality and with whom he is comfortable - and sort out his problem. Or he should consult one of his fellow-murids (pirbhais). And if he does not find anyone from among these two groups, then he should consult with a Mufti - one who has the same fervour (zouq) - in that particular worrying affair. This is the mas'alah. And there should be no hindrance in seeking such a consultation, because hindrances are due to jah (sense of self-importance; status; conceit), whereas this Khalifah has blown jah away - he has annihilated jah. If he does feel a constraint and reluctance, then how did he manage to become a Khalifah and a Sheikh?

Just as there may be a hindrance presenting itself in 'ulume batinah (knowledge of the batin), similar problems may also arise in 'ulume zahirah, as was the case with Maulana Muhammed Ya'qab sahib (RA). He was delivering a lesson in Bukhari Sharif. While giving the lesson, he got stuck at a particular point. Maulana was the principal of the institute. He took the kitab, got up and went to one of the ustads (teacher) under him, and said, "Maulana, just have a look at this passage. I seem to have become a bit stuck. Just give me an explanation on it." The Maulana complied, had a look and gave his dissertation. Maulana Ya'qab sahib (RA) went back to his class and told the students, "I went to this Maulana sahib for him to explain this passage to me. He has fulfilled the haq of this passage very well and his explanation is as follows..." This incident Maulana Ya'qab sahib (RA) himself

repeated often. I heard this incident being related by Hadhratwala (RA). How did Maulana Ya'qab sahib (RA) bring himself to seek the assistance of a junior ustad? The reason is that full and complete tazkiyah had taken place. Nowadays there is no such tazkiyah.

The basic root has been eradicated. The basic root and fundamental ill is Hubbe-Dunya - love of materialism.

حب دنيا رأس كل خطيئة

Love of dunya is the root of all sins.

This root has been extirpated - it has been taken out completely. And when the root has been taken out, how can there be a trunk? Branches emerge from the trunk. If the root is not there and there is no trunk, how can there be any branches? So, Hubbe-dunya is the root, and the root has been eradicated - eradicated in such a way that it does not sprout again. This is termed zawaale akhlaaqe razilah bimalkah taamah. A root will sprout a little shoot; the shoot develops into a trunk; the trunk will give off branches; and the branches will have smaller branches coming off them. Seeing there is no root, where will the impure, evil and disgraceful branches spring out from? Where will takabbur (arrogance) come from? Where will tama' (avarice) spring from? Where will hirs (greed) show itself? Where will bukhl (stinginess) show itself? From where will gussah (anger) poke its head? The root is non-existent. The root of all the akhlaaqe-razilah is hubbe-dunya. The Eternal Being is so embedded in the heart that there is just no place for finite

beings. This is because what is Eternal and what is finite are two opposites, and two opposites cannot occupy the same position at the same time.

LOVING ONE'S WIFE AND WILAAYET

That is why Hadhratwala (RA) used to say, "That person who has love for his wife - what is real and true 'ishq - what doubt can there be in his being a wali of Allah Ta'ala?" This is what Hadhratwala (RA) said. Its explanation is as follows: The apron of wilaayet (saintliness) demands an extremely exquisite and fantastic degree of chastity. (This means that, in order to aspire to the high state of being a saint - a wali of Allah Ta'ala - an extremely high degree of modesty and chastity are absolutely essential). So, upon having true 'ishq for one's wife, it follows that one will not gaze lustfully at others. Thus, this person will have an extreme degree of chastity and, therefore, what doubt can there be that this is the degree of chastity required for wilaayet and, therefore, of this person being a wali?

To love one's wife - to have 'ishq for her - is not 'ishq for gairullah (love for somebody other than Allah Ta'ala). This 'ishq is for the sake of Allah Ta'ala. Huzur's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) du'a was:

اللهم ارزقني حبك و حب من ينفعني حبه عندك

O Allah! I am asking for the rizq of Your muhabbat (love) and the muhabbat of that person whose muhabbat will be an aid to Your muhabbat.

Therefore, such muhabbat for one's wife will be an aid and reinforcement of one's muhabbat of Zate Bari Ta'ala. This can, therefore, not be considered to be 'ishq of gairullah. Such a person will be an embodiment of chastity. The proof of this is the

following: To what a high degree did Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) not have 'ishq for Allah Ta'ala! Yet, despite this, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) also had 'ishq for Hadhrat A'ashah (RA). Despite this 'ishq for her, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) fulfilled the rights of equality with regard to his other wives. Even in his terminal illness Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) observed the finer points of fulfilling their rights, but nevertheless, he eagerly waited for the turn of Hadhrat A'ashah (RA). When the other wives came to know of his feelings, that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) anxiously awaited the turn of Hadhrat A'ashah (RA), and that he experienced difficulty in going to each one in turn, all the other wives unanimously said, "Stay with A'ashah from now onwards." The point is that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had 'ishq for Hadhrat A'ashah (RA). So, to have 'ishq for one's wife is not contrary to dawame-ta'at - nay, to the contrary, it is included in dawame-ta'at.

To recapitulate: This digression occurred when we were discussing zikr: We had said that zikr is of two types, direct zikr or indirect zikr; we had also stated that zikr could also fall into the category of dawame-zikr; and then we had discussed small amounts of zikr and abundant zikr. Included was a discussion on the interlocking of two ibadat.

INCREASE IN IMAN

Originally, we were saying that in ‘wa alzamahum kalimatut taqwa' the possessive case of the Kalimah is towards taqwa, and by Kalimah is meant Kalimah Tayyibah, which is a zikr. And then its demand is taqwa. Taqwa, in turn, is the name of the

wajib duty of dawame-ta'at. The demand of the Kalimah is kathrate-zikr. This Kalimah is also the basic fundamental of Iman. So, if the demand of the Kalimah is taqwa, to which is attached Iman, Haq Ta'ala causes an increase in the Iman.

[This paragraph appears rather complicated. In simple terms Hadhratji (RA) is demonstrating the interconnection of the Kalimah, zikr, taqwa and Iman. This being so, by abundant zikr, one's Iman will also increase, as is proven by the ayet that follows. Tr.]

ي قُلُوبِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِيمَانًا مَعَ إِيمَانِهِمْ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ فِ

He (Allah) is such, Who has created forbearance (tahammul) in the hearts of the Muslims so that the their Iman can increase with the initial Iman that they had. (Bayanul Qur'an) (48:4)

One may put it forward as follows: "Take this Iman, and then take some more Iman!" That is, Allah Ta'ala is saying that the purpose of developing tahammul (forbearance) is to increase one's Iman. From the grammatical analysis of this verse, the meaning we arrive at is that, by being given the tahammul in the original Iman, their Iman was increased. We can deduce that there is a continual increase in Iman, and that this increase in Iman accrues by means of having taqwa with the Iman.

Who does not desire an increase in matters that are good? The farmer desires an increase in his cultivation; the landowner desires an increase in his properties; the trader desires an increase in his business. So, everybody wishes to have an increase

in what is good. So, O Mu'mineen! What can be better and greater than Iman? So, why is there not a quest for an increase in Iman?

And, if the desire is there, there is a means and methodology for increasing everything. If the farmer wishes an increase in his produce, he ploughs the land thoroughly, he sows the best quality seeds at the proper time, he waters it when necessary and he protects the plants - as far as is possible - from storms and hail. In the same way the landowner will accumulate money to buy more land. In the same way the trader buys good quality merchandise at the right time at a cheap price and then sells the merchandise at the appropriate time at a good profit. Is this not so, or do you think that an increase will accrue by itself? In the same way, O Mu'mineen, the Iman that you have and the increase that you desire in it, the procedure - besides which there is no other procedure - is that you occupy yourself in ta'at and zikr. The basic concept behind zikr is to seat that Being in the heart and the mention (zikr) of this Being flowing from the lips continually. What is in the heart is on the lookout for any excuse to stream out of the lips. What is normally seated in the heart? The answer is: that for which one has an extremely high degree of love (muhabbat); and there is no other being who is worthy of such extreme love except Zat Bari Ta'ala! Therefore, there is absolutely no reason why His Name should not keep coming to one's lips. Haq Ta'ala has made this such a general activity that even taharat (ceremonial purity of the body) is not even necessary. Taharat has not been made a precondition (unlike other acts of ibadat) for making zikr. Allah Ta'ala desires dawame-zikr; and dawame-ta'at involves zikr, as has

been explained above in the Hadath Sharif, that every obedient bondsman is a zakir, at times directly and at times indirectly.

So, that mudarris (lecturer) who, with ikhlas (sincerity) and qana'at (contentment), without hirs-o-tama' (greed and avarice) and acquisitiveness (lalach) for wealth, is giving Dana ta'lam - even though he is teaching kitabs preparatory to the study of Bukhara Sharif - he is in ta'at and directing himself to Allah Ta'ala. This is so even though he may be reciting the grammatical declensions of "fa'ala, yaf'alu", or listening to the students, and he is listening with full concentration. If he does not listen with full concentration, then some student may be repeating the declensions incorrectly, and this will be contrary to his responsibility to his profession of teaching. Therefore, he most definitely has to listen with full attention to the student. On such occasions his zikr will diminish, because the mind cannot concentrate on two things at the same time. But this diminishing is not a real diminution. Take it that somebody sneezes involuntarily or coughs involuntarily - for that short while, temporarily, there will be some diminution perceived, but this is not real diminution. In the real sense of the word diminution would mean a lessening evident all the time - when he is sitting, when he is standing, when he is walking, when he is eating, when he is making wudha, when he is tired, when he is weak. This is real diminution. The incidental diminution that comes at the time of sneezing or coughing would not be referred to as real diminution. Similarly, the lessening that comes in one's zikr or tawajjuh-illallah (attention towards Allah Ta'ala) when involved in some other ta'at, will not be termed a diminution. Real diminution is that situation in which the thought of Allah Ta'ala, the consciousness

of Allah Ta'ala, the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala in one's heart is not there most of the time. Most of the time the Name of Allah Ta'ala is not on the tongue.

These are masa'il (rules) of Suluk. That person, who is a real and serious salik, has a dire need for these masa'il. Just as there are masa'il of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), so there are masa'il of Suluk as well. Those who perform namaz have a extreme need to know the masa'il of namaz. Similarly, those involved in the ibadat and ta'at of purification of the inner self, have a need of these masa'il - and the need is extremely important. Whereas those not performing their namaz or not performing their qadha, what need have they of the masa'il of namaz? Similarly, those who are not pursuing the path leading to islah, which entails spiritual cleansing (tazkiyah), purification (tasfayah), detoxification (takhlayah), and adornment (tajlayah) - what need have they of the masa'il of Suluk? So, just as the talib of salat has need of the masa'il of salat, in the same manner the true and sincere talib of tazkiyah has need of the masa'il of Suluk at every step.

I remember an episode concerning Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA): Hadhratwala (RA) mentioned that Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA), when he reached old age, used to remark, "What I have achieved at this stage of my life is that I do not find it necessary to consult any kitab to look for any mas'alah concerning namaz." The deduction from this statement is that, after such a long period, he had mastered that amount of knowledge concerning namaz that it was not necessary for him to refer to any kitab. It also infers that this knowledge refers to masa'il of namaz only. As for the other ibadat, whether it pertains to acts of

worship or to the category of transactions, etc., he still found it necessary to refer to other kitabs.

O Muftis! [Hadhratji (RA) was addressing the eight to ten students of Ifta' - the Mufti course - present in the majlis.] Just assess how necessary it is to study kitabs; how extremely important it is to devote one's time to attaining 'ilm; and how imperative it is to research, to probe, to investigate, to explore in-depth. And, seeing how necessary it is to research the masa'il of namaz, etc., of the zahiri ibadat, then similarly - nay, even more so - is it necessary to know the masa'il of the batini ibadat. The masa'il mentioned above are ones concerning Suluk and Tasawwuf - masa'il of the batin - which the Ahle batin (those treading the path of Suluk) have need.

IMPORTANCE OF ASKING

Example one: Once a lady came to ask a mas'alah. She said, "My husband has passed away (and I am in 'iddat). Some gair-mahram men (those who is are strangers in Shar'i terms) do not wait for permission before entering the house. They merely clear their throat audibly and walk in. My gaze fell on them. What I wish to know is: has my 'iddat become invalid by my gaze falling on them?" These are some misconceptions, from the Age of Ignorance, that are fixed in the minds of people and such misconceptions are eradicated with great difficulty. But see, this lady felt the need so she went to find out the mas'alah.

The answer to this query is as follows: She will need to leave the house to answer the call of nature; or she will leave the house to see to the cooking, if there is

nobody to assist her; or even if there is somebody to assist her, then too she may need to leave the precincts of the house itself. However, she should not go beyond the boundary of the last door on the property. And if her gaze falls on somebody while in the house, it does not break the 'iddat. That leaves the question of purdah: Those with whom she has to observe purdah, this she has to do all the time, whether she is observing her 'iddat or not.

Example two: There was another query: A certain person asked the following mas'alah: "I had some black material with me, imported from another country. I had some clothes sewn with it for personal use. Somebody told me that it is haram (forbidden) to wear black clothes." He must have heard it from some Shi'ah, etc. In my reply I said, "Ask this other person what is the reason for it being haram. He should provide proof of it." This reply has the answer to his query as well that, when there is no Shar'i reason for a item to be na-ja'iz (impermissible), then it is ja'iz (permissible). At times such errors occur when people have no knowledge of the Shara'at.

You see that neither did that lady's 'iddat become invalid, nor is it haram to wear black-coloured clothing, but not knowing the mas'alah, both persons became distressed and made necessary enquiries. It happens similarly with that person treading the path of Suluk that he may come across some problem and become distressed through ignorance. It may be that the matter was correct, but in his view he thought it to be incorrect. This is why it is necessary for him to know the masa'il of Suluk.

MASA'IL OF Suluk

This is why the majlis of the sheikh is a majlis of the knowledge of Suluk for the salikan - it is a majlis of the knowledge of tazkiyah. There is not ta'lam (teaching) of only zikr, but the majlis is for the knowledge of zikr. That is, the majlis takes place to narrate those categories of knowledge which become necessary when the effects of making zikr manifest themselves. Similarly, the majlis takes place to impart the knowledge of the presentation of the effects of dawame-ta'at with zikr. The majlis is not for the ta'lam of tasbah and zikr.

So, in the same manner that the person performing namaz will benefit from the mention of the masa'il of namaz, and he will be happy at these explanations, those who are travelling on the path of Suluk - those who are involved in their tazkiyah, who encounter problems all the time, who experience certain manifestations - these are the ones who will benefit from these discourses. Their hearts will be happy at these discussions. Their hearts will be affected by these talks. Certain sentences will actually make them ecstatic. As was mentioned just now, that person able to make only a little zikr because of being occupied with Deeni or permissible worldly work has no lesser thawab and qurb than that person able to make zikr in abundance. How happy will these people not feel on hearing this mas'alah of Suluk! Each such individual will tell himself, "Today I have been given the answer to my question - the answer to that problem that I thought was some deficiency in me and which caused me to become despondent. Today I have received an answer bringing with it inner tranquillity." He will be feeling happy and will continue with his efforts.

Hadhratwala (RA) related an incident concerning Shah Fadhlur-Rahman Ganj Muraad-Aabaadi (RA). Before relating this incident let me relate another incident that comes to mind. This concerns obedience to the sheikh (ittiba-e-sheikh) and was also related to us by Hadhratwala (RA):

QISSAH ONE

It was frequently witnessed that at Shah Sahib's place (i.e. at Shah Fadhlur-Rahman Ganj Muraad-Aabaada's (RA) place) a visitor would be curtly sent away. Shah Sahib would bluntly instruct, "Take him out of here! O, just take him away!" Once it happened that the minister (wazir) of Shah-Jahan Begumwaliah Bhopal arrived at his place. It was at night. According to his habit Shah Sahib said, "Go! Go!" He gave the order for him to be taken away. Shah Sahib's son, whose name was Muhammed-Mia, said, "This is the wazir of the Nawab-Begum of Bhopal." Shah Sahib remarked, speaking loudly, "So, what has that to do with me? If he is a wazir, he is a wazir of his own place. Get him out!" He was always in a state of juzb (absorption). Shah Sahib's son pleaded with his father again. Shah Sahib relented, "Very well. Call him in." He was called in. Shah Sahib asked, "What brings you here?" The wazir replied, Begumsahibah has sent me to request you to make du'a for her." Shah Sahib said, "Very well. I shall make du'a." The du'a was made. The wazir even obtained permission to stay over, but on condition that it was only till midnight. That is, he had permission to stay in the khanqah till twelve or one o'clock only. He was to leave the khanqah after that. The wazir agreed to this.

Just see now how he acted. Think about it. From this one will be able to gauge what the quality of the people of that age was and what the attitude was of those who supposedly had proper i'tiqad. Nowadays? Just do not ask!

Hadhratwala related that when the time for him to leave approached, the wazir sahib gathered up his baggage and prepared to depart. Disturbed from their sleep, the eyes of some of the others residing in the khanqah opened and they saw the wazir sahib ready to leave. These residents of the khanqah, these who had faith and confidence (i'tiqad) in their Sheikh, said, "Where will you go at this early hour? Where will you stay? It is still night. You will have difficulties. Stay over here and you may leave in the morning." The wazir sahib, who was from a noble family - nobility has with it a certain effect - said, "It was the order of the Sheikh. I had permission to stay only till this time. If I were to stay beyond this time, it will be betrayal of a trust and I will be acting in opposition to his command. I cannot stay. I will leave the khanqah and stay in some masjid or other." Consequently, he did not stay, but left immediately.

From this you can gauge what those with i'tiqad were saying and what level of behaviour that wazir sahib exhibited. This incident has been mentioned incidentally because of the beneficial lesson in it. What I actually wanted to do was relate another incident.

QISSAH TWO

In a similar manner, another individual came to Shah Sahib. Salam and musaafahah (greeting and shaking of hands) took place cordially. After a short

while Shah Sahib said, "Very well! Go! Get up!" This person stayed put - he refused to get up! Shah Sahib himself stood up, took this person's bedding and placed it outside the door. This person stood up, went to fetch his bedding from outside and brought it straight back in and sat down again! Shah Sahib said, "You have come back? Get up! Go!" When this person remained seated, Shah Sahib again stood up, took his bedding and again placed it outside. This person again fetched his bedding and again came to sit inside. Shah Sahib again took the bedding out and this person again brought it in. This cycle repeated itself three or four times. Shah Sahib then said, "Have something to eat - it is mealtimes." Shah Sahib went inside the house and sent some food from inside. The visitor said, "All this hustle and bustle is because of food - I shall not eat the food!" He sent the food back. Shah Maulana Fadhlur-Rahman Ganj Murad-Aabaada sahib (RA) brought the food back himself and said, "Brother, the fight is between me and you and not with the food. Eat the food." The visitor said, "I shall not eat." Shah Sahib said again, "What fight is there with the food? Come, eat the food." This time the visitor complied and ate. Shah Sahib then asked, "Why have you come?" The visitor replied, "There is some obstacle in my batini condition. I have come to have it remedied." Shah Sahib said, "Oho! Why did you not say so right at the beginning? I had thought that, just like all these worldly people who come here for me to make du'a for their worldly problems, you had also come for the same purpose. They waste much of one's time." Shah Sahib said, "Fine. Sit down." The visitor came to sit nearby and Shah Sahib resolved the problem that the person had encountered. The visitor made salam and musafahah, and then departed.

It is appropriate to note that Shah Sahib did not get kashf of the purpose of the visitor's coming, whereas Shah Sahib used to experience a lot of kashf. Kashf is not essential for a person to be a burzug - if kashf occurs, well and good; if it does not occur it is not a problem.

In Suluk and Tasawwuf - also called Tazkiyah Batin - together with deeds performed, certain conditions of a unique type present themselves. This person then experiences difficulties. In order to solve these problems it is necessary to know certain laws. These are called the masa'il of Tasawwuf. These discourses are to enunciate these masa'il of Tasawwuf. These discourses are not for enumerating the masa'il of Fiqah. These discourses are beneficial for those who are involved in the tazkiyah of their batin. Those who do not fall into this category should sit silently, for they will not understand. Take this example: If somebody is absolutely famished and he is asked, "How much is two plus two?" He will say, "Four slices of bread." The reason is that he is desirous of bread. He will not say, "Four rupees," because he is not desirous of rupees at that moment.

SAKEENAH

I was saying that when the demand of the Kalimah is taqwa, then Haq Ta'ala creates sakeenah (calmness/ tranquillity) and tahammul (forbearance) in the hearts of the Mu'min muttaqa, so that there may be an increase in the Iman that is present within him. It is thus apparent that Iman can increase. What are the ways and means of attaining this? It is dawame-ta'at and kathrate-zikr.

At this juncture there is a point that ordinary folks will also understand: Haq Ta'ala is saying that Allah Ta'ala creates sakeenah in the hearts of the Mu'minan. From this it is to be understood that it is necessary that there should be tahammul in the heart of every Mu'min. Another name for this is waqar (dignity / gravity). This means that when one is confronted by some behaviour from others that is contrary to one's temperament - either episodically or continually - one's own attitude should portray sakeenah; one should display tahammul; one should not exceed the bounds of dignity; one should not descend into a state where one uses harshness in speech, or words or tone of voice. His bitter act should be considered to be a draft of sweet nectar and swallowed! And when will this happen - when will one consider a bitter draft to be sweet nectar? This will only happen if you have drunk it in Suluk - when the batina tazkiyah of the nafs has become solidly embedded in the heart. Then, when that which is embedded in the heart, comes to mind - the concepts firmly planted in the heart are pictured, the ingrained lessons are remembered - this inner force converts the bitter draft to sweet nectar and swallows it. What is this inner force that is sitting there? It is called "Radha-e-Ilaahi" (being pleased with Allah Ta'ala). Radha' has converted all bitter things to sweet nectars.

Take this illustration: In the old days when we attended school, malaria was common. As a preventative measure the Headmaster would line up the pupils at midday and make them take quinine in his presence. Water was kept nearby; the tablet was given and gulped down with the water. Why did he have to personally supervise this? The reason is that the quinine tablet was very bitter and he had to personally supervise the whole procedure to ensure that nobody defaulted. But

nowadays there has been progress: the quinine tablet is sugar-coated. It can be swallowed easily without having to be washed down with huge amounts of water. Just see how a bitter pill was made sweet so that it could slide down the throat with ease.

In the same way, that bitter action that you encounter from others, the nectar of Radha-e-Ilaahi, which is kept inside you, is mixed with the bitterness and swallowed with ease. In the same way that the bitter quinine tablet is coated with sugar and swallowed to maintain physical health, it is also necessary to swallow the bitter words of others to maintain spiritual (rahana) health. And what constituent is necessary to eliminate the bitterness? It is Radha. This Radha-e-Ilaahi is an objective in order to achieve qurb-e-Ilaahi. That is why that bitter item has been made sweet and swallowed. This is the effect of treading the path of Suluk. Even if it is not achieved all at once, it will come steadily, by degrees. The reason is that this person is concerned and attentive, and the effects will manifest, slowly and gradually. His condition becomes such that if anybody throws abuse at him he is not grieved. If he is affected, then it is only momentarily - here it comes and there it goes. He does not sit down despondent. If somebody thumps him on the back he does not even look back to see who it was. He is involved in tazkiyah - involved to that extent that a bitter item, a bitter word, is converted to a sweet word and swallowed.

CONCLUSION AND DU'A

I have proven from the segment of the ayet, "Kalimatat-taqwa", the compulsory nature of obedience, as well as some masa'il of Suluk, and the importance of tazkiyah of the Nafs. When it becomes compulsory to act on Kalimatut-taqwa, then an increase in Iman occurs, as has been explained in detail above.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us talabe saadiq, with zouq and shouq, and may He grant us the taufeeqe arzani to adopt the ways and means that Allah Ta'ala has mentioned, of increasing our Iman. aaa a Khuda Hafiz

Chapter No.:

17

Reality Of Wudhu

Qissah Concerning Khwaajah Mu'innudin Chisti (RA)

Eat What Is Pure, Delicious And Of High Quality

Duties of a Slave

The Ruh was In Mushhhadah-e-Haqq

The Progress of Imaan

Eating & Drinking What is Delicious Is Not Contrary To Zuhd

Eating Halaal And Tayyib Produces Ruhaaniyet And Nuraaniyet

Virtues Of An Honest Trader

Qissah Of The Neighbour of Hadhrat Junaid Bagdaadi (RA)

Rihaa'ish, Aasaa'ish, Zaybaa'ish, Numaa'ish

Necessities Of Life

Qissah Of The Bamboo-Seller

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Hadhrat Mawlana Muhammad Maseehullah Khan Sahib (RA) was born in Sarai Barlah in the district of Aligarh in the year 1329 or1330 H. Hadhrat's (RA) lineage is linked to the noble Sharwani family of landed nobility, and being linked to Sayyid Hussain Ghauri (RA), the lineage is also Sayyid. Hadhrat (RA) attended the local government school up to standard six, but did not continue with his secular education, preferring to study Din, which he studied initially in his home town, and thereafter completing his studies in Deoband. Hadhrat (RA) became bay't to Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA), from whom Hadhrat (RA) received his Khilafat

the same year that Hadhrat (RA) qualified from Deoband. Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA) stationed Hadhrat (RA) in Jalalabadi, where Hadhrat (RA) established the madrassah, Miftahul-Uloom, and a khanqah where saalikeen stayed for their self-rectification. He passed away in Jalalabad on the 17th Jamaadul-Ulaa 1413 H. (14th November 1992).

FOREWORD

Alhamdulillah, Once again, solely through the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of my Sheikh (RA) this fifteenth discourse is ready. (Also, not forgetting the valued du'as of our readers!)

Many readers found the majlis translated in Booklet Number Fourteen a bit difficult to understand. I thus felt that the next majlis to be translated should be easy to understand. Through Allah Ta'ala's fadhl, I was given some tapes of some majaalis that were conducted by Hadhratji (RA) on one of his trips to South Africa. Among these was a majlis on eating, drinking, clothes and homes - simple and basic topics that affect everybody. One may feel that there cannot be much to discuss as far as these subjects are concerned, but with the unique talents that Allah Ta'ala had bestowed Hadhratji (RA), these basic topics are discussed with such perspectives as to leave one quite wonderstruck.

May Allah Ta'ala give us all the tawfeeq to benefit from these discourses.

Dr. Ismaiel Mangera

Clarification: The "For Friends" series are translations of works in Urdu, mostly from recorded tapes. The original discourses in Urdu are not necessarily recorded by me. For example, the Wasayet that appears at the end of Booklet Number Six was given to Hadhrat Mawlana Dr. Hafiz Tanweer Ahmed Khan Sahib (RA) who noted it down in Urdu, and which was then translated by me into English. Yes, I do remember being present in some of the majaalis, but not all of them. It is not possible to note down all those who were instrumental in recording these majaalis or printing the Urdu versions or making them available to me. Readers are requested to make du'a for all involved in having these booklets published.

[This is a translation of a majlis held by Hadhrat Maulana Maseehullah Khan Saheb (RA) in South Africa, either in 1982 or 1984.]

Food, Drink, Clothes & Homes

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ

O ye who Believe! Eat what is tayyib - pure, delicious and of high quality - which We have provided for you. (2:172)

I have been requested to conduct a majlis - that there should be discourse for a period. So, this is a majlis, but it has also taken on the form of a bayan (lecture).

Pondering on what to speak on, the thought came that bayans on different topics are being given on an ongoing basis on various occasions. And generally, in the minds of people, this thought is embedded that the Molvi Sahiban (learned

scholars), what else will they speak on except namaaz and rozah (prayer and fasting)? And that we have heard these topics discussed many times already.

Reality Of Wudhu

So, I could not think that if there is to be a bayan on what topic it should be. Ears are already well-acquainted with these topics. I would go so far as to say that people are filled to the brim. And whatever item one's heart is filled to capacity, no delight or enjoyment remains in that item. If one were to lecture on wudhu (ablution) people will say that they know how to make wudhu. However, if one has to ponder over the correct meaning of the word "wudhu", that the root word from which it is derived is "dhau" which means "light / brilliance", that, making wudhu for years on end, the light and brilliance that is kept in wudhu, has still not entered one's heart, can one still claim that one knows how to make wudhu? If one knew, it may be that one has performed what is fardh (compulsory) but has not paid any attention to what is sunnat (lesser category than fardh) and mustahab (optional), there being no waajib (category lesser than fardh, but higher than sunnat) acts in wudhu. Also, one may have had no qualms on having left out what is sunnat and mustahab.

Contrary to this, let us look at those personages who, because of their ta'alluq (connection) with Allah Ta'ala, their nisbat (attachment) with Allah Ta'ala, their muhabbat (love) of Allah Ta'ala, that if they leave out any act commanded to them, even though they may not be it in the category of fardh, waajib, but may be in the category of sunnat and mustahab, they feel as if there is a massive burden placed

on them, as if a snake has bitten them in their very chests. Until they have not compensated for their lapse, they are not at ease and do not rest. The worrying thought is, "On the Day of Qiyaamat what face will I show to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)?"

Qissah Concerning Khwajah Mu'innudin Chisti (RA)

So much so, that Khwajah Mu'innudin Chisti (RA) once read his Isha namaaz (late evening prayer) and went to sleep. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) came to him in his dream and said, "Mu'innudin! You claim to have muhabbat for me, but you have omitted a sunnat? When making wudhu for Isha you left out making khilaal of your fingers?" Khwajah Sahib's temperament was not like mine and yours. His disposition had a completely different hue to it. His eyes opened from his sleep. He got up, repeated his wudhu and performed his Isha namaaz again. Was his initial wudhu not valid? It was. Was his initial Isha namaaz not valid? It was. Yet, people like us make an effort to bring perfection to all our worldly tasks, that there should be no defect at all in that task. Here, there was a shortcoming, a certain defect - a sunnat was omitted, a mustahab act was neglected. How could he tolerate this? His ta'alluq with Allah Ta'ala was not like ours. He made wudhu again and repeated his namaaz. He was not satisfied with only this - he was not complacent with this act only, he was not content at merely doing this. However, in compensation for his neglect, being penitent, "Why had I omitted the mustahab of khilal of the fingers?" he performed a hundred rak'ats of nafl (optional) namaaz daily for a period of six months certainly, but I think it could have been for a year!

This is why there was an illumination produced in his heart from the act of wudhu. What his namaaz did was a stage much higher.

As I was saying, were I to speak on wudhu, people will say that we know how to make wudhu. The same will be said about namaaz. So, my mind kept on pondering: What should I speak on? People have heard everything - bayans take place almost daily. Also, may Allah Ta'ala cause the Tablighi Jamaa't to progress more, with blessings (barkat) and sincerity (ikhlaas) - its talks are ongoing, mostly on Kalimah Tayyibah and namaaz. So, nothing came to mind. Just now, a little while ago, when I entered the Ibaadat khaanah (place of prayer) for the Maghreb namaaz (prayer immediately after sunset), and as I sat down, this ayet (verse of the Qur'an Shareef) which I have recited a little while ago before you, came to mind. Bayans on namaaz and rozah are given all the time, so why not speak on eating and drinking? That is why I recited that short ayet before you. Make du'a (supplicate) that Allah Ta'ala gives the tawfeeq to give a bayan in connection with this ayet.

Eat What Is Pure, Delicious and of High Quality

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ

In this ayet Allah Ta'ala is addressing the Mu'mineen (Believers).

O ye who Believe! Eat what is tayyib - pure, delicious and of high quality - which We have provided for you. (2:172)

That is, "Eat of the rizq - Our provisions - given to you by Us." "Tayyib" means what is not only pure but of high quality and delicious as well. This is the meaning of this ayet.

The question arises: Why is the word "Amanu" (Believers) attached to eating? The grammatical form is that of a command, making it compulsory (wajib). So, how is it that it is wajib to eat? Together with this command is the condition of "tayyib" - pure and delicious. And further on it is stated, "Which We have provided". A number of issues need to be discussed.

Firstly, the order is to eat. Why has the order been given to eat? The reason is this that those addressed are the "Aamanu" - those who believe, the Muminen. Much is contained in the words employed. "Imam" means to have conviction - to firmly believe, to accept. To have conviction on something implies that whatever is kept in that word is firmly believed - all those aspects that are covered by this word are accepted. This would then mean, "O those of you who believe in Allah Ta'ala - those who have brought faith on His existence, with the attribute of "Wahdaniyat" (Him being One, with no partners), seeing He is Alim, Qadir, Sami', Basir, Mutasarrif being One Who, bearing in mind your needs, created the heavens and the earth and whatever is on the earth, and whatever is between the heavens and the earth (the wind, clouds, etc.), through His Power. And you cannot deny this. You have to acknowledge that our Magnanimous and Bountiful Creator has created all these for us."

Furthermore: "When I have been your Creator through My Power, then from the aspect of Divinity, why should I not be the only Deity worthy of being worshipped? When, through My Power, for your sake I created everything for your every necessity, that you are dependent on Me for all your needs for your existence, and this you acknowledged and accepted, what is the reason for you not accepting My Divinity in the aspect of worshipping Me only in the manner prescribed (tashri'i)? It is absolutely necessary that you also accept Me as One being worthy of worship. And, when this the case that I am the only One worthy of being worshipped - that I am your Master, your Nourisher and Cherisher, your Creator, Most High, All Powerful, All Hearing and All Seeing, All Domineering, having full power and control over everything - what other being can there be that is worthy of being worshipped? It therefore becomes conclusive and necessary that there is none other worthy of worship except Me, and that your service - which is termed ‘ibadat' - becomes necessary."

This conclusion is compulsory, but nonetheless, there is also an ayet laying down the instruction (tasrihan), the purpose for the creation of mankind. Allah Ta'ala has stated:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالإِنْسَ إِلاَّ لِيَعْبُدُونِ

"I have not created Jinn and Man except that they worship Me only..." (51:56)

What was compulsory from the aspect of takwin, has now been placed in a tasrihi context.

The grammatical construction is such that emphasis is placed on the word "only". Seeing that at this moment it is Mankind that is being addressed, the ayet states that insan (mankind) has been created for the ibadat of Allah Ta'ala alone. We have restricted the meaning of ibadat to namaz and rozah only. Note that the word is "liya'budan" (to make ibadat) and not "liyasollun" (to perform salat), or "liyasumun" (to keep fasts), or "liyazukkun" (to pay zakat), or "liyazakkarun"(to make zikr). The wording is not that we have been created for specific acts only, like performing salat, or keeping fasts, or giving zakat, or making zikr. A general term has been used - that we have been created for His worship solely.

Duties Of A Slave

The root word of "ya'budun" is "abd" and it means "a slave". In Farsi, the word is "bandah". Thus, Allah Ta'ala is our Master and we are His slaves. The meaning of the ayet would thus be as follows:

"I have created mankind for My slavery - that he should live as my slave." As you know, a slave has no specified duties but general duties. If he is told to cook food, he cooks food; if he is told at any time to massage the legs of his master, he massages his legs; if he is instructed to spread out the dastarkhan (tablecloth) and feed others, he spreads it out and feeds others; if he is told to prepare water for wudhu or istinja (cleansing after answering the call of nature), he prepares the water; and, dear brothers, if the king is invited anywhere at any time and he is unable to attend, he will give the very same slave of his the necessary royal

credentials and send him to represent royalty at the function. This is the reality of being a slave.

From here it is apparent his position is not the same as that of a servant, worker or employee. In this latter situation the worker is given a specific duty to perform in a specific time period and he is liable to be paid when his duties end.

The whole creation was present for this type of duty. The various creations had the necessary fortitude, they had the necessary strength. Allah Ta'ala had created vegetation, minerals, animals, malaikah (angels), and so forth. There is not a single creation from amongst these which is not making a very specific ibadat of Allah Ta'ala.

Shah Waliyullah (RA), in his amazing kitab, "Hujjatullahul Balighah", has written an amazing commentary. He states that if we look at the trees, they are also occupied in ibadat: their ibadat is qiyam - standing erect. Creation like stone and rock, in the form of mountains, are also in ibadat. The ibadat of mountains is qu'ud - to sit down firmly. Animals are of varied forms. The quadruplets are in ruku (bowing)- they are bent forward. Some animals are in perpetual sajdah (prostration). These are animals like the snake, the turtle and the scorpion - animals that drag themselves along the ground and remain on the ground entirely. In this way animals, minerals and vegetation are all in ibadat - some standing erect, some bowing forwards, others in prostration and others firmly set in the ground.

Similarly, the malaikah are also in ibadat. They have very specific ibadat. Those who were instructed to be in ruku when they were created, are in ruku and will

remain in ruku till the day of Qiyamat. Others, when created, were commanded to be in sajdah, will remain in sajdah till the day of Qiyamat. Others are in qiyam, others in jalsah, others in qadah. (To sit after sajdah is called jalsah; and to sit after the erect, qiyam, position is called qadah - both terms refer to sitting). So, the malaikah are also in ibadat, but in very specific ibadat of only one type. So much so that seventy thousand malaikah circum-ambulate (make tawaf of) the Baitul Ma'mur on a daily basis, and those who have had an opportunity once, do not get an opportunity to make tawaf again till the Day of Qiyamat. Daily, a new group of seventy thousand malaikah continue to make tawaf of the Baitul Ma'mur. So, what must their numbers be? From this you can see that the ibadat of the malaikah is in the category of an employee, that they have been set to do a specific duty for a specific time-period. On the contrary, the situation as far as insan (man) is concerned; his ibadat, his obedience and his service are not in the category of a worker or employee, but in the category of a slave, of a khalifah. A slave has no one specific duty. Whatever work is entrusted to the slave he is willing and ready to carry it out. The master of a slave has the right to order him as he wishes, and even to sell him.

So, when Allah Ta'ala states that He has created man only for His worship it means that man has been created for servitude to Allah Ta'ala. One cannot say that, since man has been created solely for the worship of Allah Ta'ala, that he has now to stay in the confines of the masjid only and occupy himself with namaz, rozah, recitation of tasbih, tilawat (recitation) of the Qur'an Sharif only. This is only one type of ibadat. This is not the correct meaning of ibadat. Real servitude is to carry out at

whatever time, whatever duty, whatever obedience, whatever service has been commanded. When told to eat, the slave is ready to eat. When told not to eat, he is ready to remain hungry. Being civilized, he may, at times, be told to behave in an ‘uncivilized' manner, he is prepared to do this even: when told to take off his clothes, wrap himself in two pieces of cloth, and told to run bareheaded, to walk round and round, he does this. When an ‘irrational' action is commanded, that he is to take some pebbles and fling them at some specific rocks, he is prepared to do this also. Obviously, I am referring to the person going for Haj, donning the ihram, making tawaf of the Kabah Sharif, and pelting the Jamarat in Minah. Goodness, is this also something rational, that you take off your normal clothes and replace them with two sheets of cloth to wrap around you, that you become bare-headed, that you cut neither your nails nor your hair? Doing all these, has the person ostensibly not gone crazy? Shaytan is neither visible nor does he stand at certain spots, but you throw pebbles at him! Hundreds of animals are present and there is no way that they will all be eaten, nevertheless, slaughter them! These, by way of illustration, are a few examples that have been placed before you.

What type of ibadat is all this? But, seeing he has placed himself in bondage to Allah Ta'ala, to perform whatever task, at whatever time, in whatever manner, this slave carries out these orders and does whatever is commanded, at whatever time and in whatever manner told to him.

When you have understood the above and this concept has become embedded within you, then the word "amanu" demands from the tashri'i aspect [as set out in the Shariat], the service, the obedience and the varied acts of ibadat, all of which

cannot be undertaken until the person has the strength to carry them out. Think about this: Until this person has not the strength and the power, what tasks will he be able to undertake? How will he hasten, how will he run, how will he climb, how will he stay hungry, how will he be able to slaughter, and, several times daily, how will he bow down, how will he able to prostrate himself, how will he be able to stand and for how long will he be able to stand? So, if he has no strength and power in his body, how will he be able to carry out these acts of obedience, service and ibadat? For a human, from the aspect of servitude, the demands of the Iman of a mu'min (believer/ one with Iman), is to remain ready at all times for obedience, service and ibadat, and for this a special physical strength and power is necessary. Mere ruhani (spiritual) strength and power by themselves are not sufficient. This ruhani strength and power are inherently present in the malaikah, who are in no need of eating and drinking as they do not possess a physical body. They have no mood-swings. They do not fall ill. They do not become weak. They do not have the basic components in their makeup for these to display themselves, in contradiction to man, who possess the basic components for these limitations to show themselves.

The Ruh Was In Mushahadah-e-Haqq

This Ruh (soul) that is inside the physical body was occupied in ibadat from before, like the malaikah. It is not that the Ruh was not occupied in ibadat in the 'Alame-Arwah (World of Souls) before it came into the world - it was involved in the ibadat of Mushahadah-e-Haqq. However, it was the wish of Allah Ta'ala that this Ruh should be placed in a physical body, become activated in it, and then be

occupied in ibadat. Otherwise, the malaikah were present for mere ibadat. But Allah Ta'ala's wish was that there should be a noble and honorable distinctive creation, with the Ruh placed in a physical body having some special qualities, and having an intelligence that could think and be able to discern, and be placed in this world. Thus, it became necessary, in order to obey, serve and make the various forms of ibadat, that this physical body has strength and power. The more strength and power that this body has, proportionately the greater will be the ibadat that it will be able to undertake. If a person wishes to stand and recite His Word to Him, but he has no strength in his legs, he will not be able to do this. If he has no strength and power in his back, he will not be able to make ruku and stay in sajdah for any length of time. This is proved daily by one's observations. How do people make ibadat when weak and when strong, when ill and when well, when at home and when on a journey? So, until there is no strength and power in this body, it will not be able to make ibadat.

So, it has become manifest that the demands of Iman are that of obedience and ibadat. And the demand of obedience and ibadat is that of physical strength and power. Now, in order to acquire these, to attain these, it is necessary that the proper means, the procedures and the methodologies, be employed. This is because this world is an 'Alam-e-Asbab - a world where means have to be employed. Until and unless the means are not utilized, Allah Ta'ala's system (Adatullah) is that the objective will not be attained. We have come to know that it is necessary to eat in order to make ibadat. And, in order to eat, edible items are necessary. And it orders to obtain these the means and methodologies for obtaining and procuring them are

necessary. And the rule is that the means that are necessary also fall into the category of necessity. Therefore, seeing ibadat is wajib, and in order to carry out ibadat eating also becomes wajib; and in order to eat utilizing the means is wajib. So, it follows, according to the rule enunciated above, that, in order to make ibadat, it becomes wajib to use the means for obtaining food. When this is so, that it becomes wajib to utilize the means for earning a livelihood, then it follows that earning a livelihood and utilizing the means for this, also fall in the category of ibadat. Ponder over this!

However, it is important to bear the following perspective in mind: The fundamental or original objective is ibadat. This is of primary importance. The means to this objective, although also falling into the category of wajib, take on a secondary importance, because they are not objectives in themselves but are a means to the primary objective of ibadat. They are subservient to the primary objective. According to values, the primary objective of ibadat will hold the highest position and will be of greatest importance, whereas the means will hold a lesser value and will be of lesser importance. So, the original ibadat will be of primary importance, eating to make ibadat will be of lesser importance and the means to attain food for eating will also be of secondary and lesser importance.

To summarise: Haqq Ta'ala has stated, "I have created you solely for My ibadat. For this ibadat strength and power is necessary. The means and methods to attain these are also ibadat as far as you are concerned, in that you may be able to eat and become stronger so that you may make more and more ibadat."

The Progress Of Iman

The progress of Iman is dependent on deeds (amal).

الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ

All good words rise to Him and He raises up all virtuous deeds. (35:10)

The Kalimah Tayyibah ascends upwards, towards the heavens. However, in soaring upwards and maintaining its momentum and attaining an elevated stage, it has no intrinsic power to do so. It requires the assistance of an external force in order to be able to propel it. Haqq Ta'ala has said that the force of elevating this Kalimah is "amilus-salihah" - good/pious deeds.

Thus, because of the demands of Iman and by virtue of the need to make ibadat, it becomes necessary to eat, so that one can have the necessary strength and power for this, and one can perform good deeds - "amilus salihah" - to increase and elevate one's Iman more and more.

That is why Allah Ta'ala has ordered, "O you with Iman, eat!" Without eating you will not be able to do anything. And this eating will be included in your ibadat. You should not consider this eating to be a "worldly" activity and you stop eating! Yes, when, together with eating and performing good deeds with taqwa (piety), you attain spiritual strength - a ruhani power - and your spirituality (ruhaniyet) becomes very elevated, eating less or not eating at all for a few days, will not bring about any physical weakness in you. But do not try to do this in the initial phases.

From the stories of the Auliya Allah, annotated in the books of history of the Auliya Allah, the following practice is proven to be true:

A wali of Allah Ta'ala took out an almond from its shell and started fasting. At the time of iftar (breaking the fast) he took out the almond and nibbled a very small piece from it, making the intention (niyet) of breaking the fast and at the same, making the intention of keeping fast on the following day. The amount of water that he drank was the amount that the webspace between the thumb and the index finger can hold. Having eaten this amount and sipped this amount of water, he fasted again on the following day! By that one nibble and sip, he has made his iftar and his sehri and has had his meal. It is not necessary that only if one sleeps and then one wakes up for a meal, then only one made sehri. He did not neglect his niyets.

In a similar manner, when entering a masjid the more niyets for khair (good deeds) that one makes the more reward (thawab) one will receive. One may make the niyet for i'tikaf, for namaz, for zikr, for tilawat, and so forth.

To continue: In this way the one almond lasted him for six months! How he managed to do this, what was his ruhani strength, how he managed to survive, are issues that he - and those who have attained some ruhaniyet - would have been able to explain. These are matters that I and you cannot fathom.

Let us leave aside such situations. These are individualised incidents to do with juzb (fervour). Generally the situation is that the demand of Iman is ibadat and this is dependent on eating. That is why Allah Ta'ala has stated:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ

Eat! Without eating you will not have the strength to make ibadat. However, bear in mind:

كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ

Eat what is halaal, pure and clean. Do not eat what is haram (forbidden). The word used is tayyib (good) and not tahir (pure). The word tayyib denotes that the food should not only be pure but delicious. This is the meaning of the word. If you wish you may check on the tafsir (commentary to the ayet). Tayyib refers to what is not only pure but delicious and enjoyable as well - that which the temperament will welcome and accept; that which will strengthen the blood. Whatever is gross and course that you eat in your diet will become excreta and the production of blood will be less. The blood that is formed will not be of a fine quality. When blood is not of a fine quality then there will be no special power and life produced. So, why should Allah Ta'ala say that one should eat what is course and indigestible, eat what is not pleasant?

Eating & Drinking What is Delicious Is Not Contrary To Zuhd

There was a Sahabi, Abul Haytham, R.A who owned an orchard situated outside of Madinah, in which there was a well. The well produced very cool water. He used to bring cool water from this well for Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to drink. From this it is apparent that if a person, according to his capabilities and strength, were to make some arrangements, without any special and undue formality, to obtain or use an item, then this would not be contrary to zuhd

(asceticism/ abstinence). It is not contrary to being unattracted to worldliness in one's heart. Zuhd means that a person, in his heart, is not attracted to or attached to dunya. By taking this cool water and drinking it, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) did not forbid us from enjoying what is delicious. The degree of joy, cheer and fulfilment experienced at drinking cold water is not experienced by drinking hot water. Yes, drinking hot tea will bring about cheer and enjoyment because these are the inherent qualities of tea. However, we are seeing people drinking cold tea - drop in some ice - as is the custom in Europe!

That is why our Haji Imdadullah Sahib (RA), the Pir of our Pir, Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA), among the many advices that he gave our Sheikh, he also gave the following bit of advice, "Mia Ashraf Ali, whenever you drink water, drink cold water, so that you may make shukr (show gratitude) with your heart. Otherwise the shukr will be only from the throat and not from the heart."

When I was still a student at Darul-‘Ulum Deoband, I once wrote to Hadhratwala (RA), that from a young age my temperament is such that I desire to eat nice food, even though it be little. I wrote, "Eating nice food, good food, produces a cheer and joy in one's disposition and from inside, from my heart, the urge arises to make shukr. So, I have the desire to eat delicious food." This is what I wrote to Hadhratwala (RA). The method of replying to letters was not to write a separate letter, but to draw a line on the same letter at the relevant area and write the reply there. Hadhratwala (RA) wrote back,

الطاعم الشاكر كالصائم الصابر

That person, having eaten and making shukr of Allah Ta'ala, is the same as that person keeping fasts and making sabr (showing forbearance). We will not go into the debate of the Sufis whether Sabr has a higher stage or Shukr.

From the incident where arrangements were undertaken to provide cool drinking water for Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), we can deduce the following principle in order to obtain a working rule: to eat what is delicious; to wear what is "delicious", to build a house that is "delicious" - that is, to enjoy good food, to wear good quality clothes and to build comfortable homes - all fall in the category of being "delightful", producing cheer and elation in one's temperament. On entering the home one's spirits lift up.

We are in need of food all the time and, generally, everybody is need of food, and strength is dependent on eating food, that is why food is being mentioned. Eat, but eat what is tayyib - what is pure, what is delicious. Another reason for this statement is that from the time of his creation, from conception to birth, this human has been safeguarded from what is haram. He has been protected from the use of impure substances. When he was in his mother's womb, you are aware that the child is being fed through blood vessels in the umbilical cord which connects the child to the mother. The mother's menses stop. The child is thus nourished through the mother's blood via the umbilical cord and not orally. Allah Ta'ala could also have made it that the mother's blood could have flowed into the mouth of the foetus and the infant be nourished orally. However, the infant has been protected from ingesting anything haram while in the mother's womb. This is an intimation from Allah Ta'ala that, "Seeing I had made these arrangements for you while you

were in your mother's womb, it is now your responsibility, after coming into this world, to maintain this arrangement yourself." If tayyib was not supposed to be for him could najis (impure) be his lot? Unthinkable!

The ruhaniyet and nuraniyet (spiritual light and effulgence) that is produced by eating what is tayyib, cannot be produced by eating what is najis (impure) and what is haram. And also, whatever the nutrition is of the species, if it is utilised in the correct manner, then the body will grow and thrive and gain strength.

The examples I can quote are those of animals. Animals are of various types and their nutrition also varies. If one species tries to imitate another and eat the food eaten by the other, it will not thrive but will destroy itself. The food of the lion is meat. If cattle or goats start eating meat will they thrive or die? They will definitely die. There is an animal called khinzir (pig). There are other species of animals which are the cow, the water-buffalo and the goat. The food of the former is rubbish and excreta, while the food of the latter are items like grain and grass, etc. If the khinzir eats what is filthy and impure, it will thrive and grow fat and strong. But if the cow, water-buffalo or goat were to eat the excreta that the khinzir eats, will they also thrive and grow fat and strong, or weak? These animals should not be eating the food eaten by the khinzir. They will obviously be harmed by this food.

In a similar way, nay, even more so, the food of insan is what is tayyib - what is pure and good, because man is more delicate than the animals. Another aspect: If the kuffar (non-believers) eat what is haram, they may thrive and become big and

fat, but when the Muslim eats what is haram, his health is going to suffer. His ruhaniyet will be corrupted. Whatever ibadat he used to do while eating halaal, he will stop performing that ibadat on eating haram. His temperament will not be lively, it will not be cheerful, and he will not be able to make ibadat - and making ibadat is the objective.

Eating Halaal and Tayyib Produces Ruhaniyet And Nuraniyet

There is the story of Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA) that goes as follows:

He went into seclusion for a period of forty days - a chillah. (We heard this qissah from Hadhratwala (R.A). The forty days passed, but he experienced no ruhaniyet or nuraniyet - there was no spiritual upliftment or exhilaration in his Iman experienced within his heart. He became perturbed. He had been fasting; he had been up at night in prayer; he had been busy with zikr and tasbih - but all to no effect. He went to his mother and said, "Ammajan, I have spent forty days fasting, staying awake at night in prayer and making zikr, but I have not noticed any effulgence in the Iman in my heart. I see no upliftment within myself. It appears that you had fed me some haram morsel. Some haram item had entered my system."

Just see where his gaze has focused on! Notice also what the qualities of the women were in that age:

She replied, "Dear son, never mind feeding you haram, I myself have never ate anything haram!" Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA) had such a strong conviction that he requested, "No, Ammajan, think carefully again."

The power of thought and meditation is such that if it is used correctly and sincerely, whatever shortcomings a person has, will present themselves to him.

She pondered deeply. After a few moments she said, "I have just remembered something: When I was pregnant, one day I was on the roof-balcony, I plucked a berry from the branch of our neighbour's berry tree and ate it, without the permission of the neighbour. This I have just remembered." (The neighbour had a berry tree and one branch spread over their house.) Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA) said, "How nice would it not be if you ask forgiveness from our neighbour." His mother felt embarrassed. "What need is there to ask to be forgiven for a mere berry?" Nevertheless, she went to the neighbour and asked to be forgiven for having eaten that one berry without permission. Her neighbour herself was amazed and exclaimed, "Is a mere berry something to make an issue of and ask to be forgiven?" Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi's (RA) mother said, "My son insists. Please forgive me in clear terms." The neighbour said, "I forgive you whole-heartedly!" Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi's (RA) mother returned home and said, "Son, I went to ask for forgiveness and our neighbour has forgiven me, and she has done so very happily." Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA) again started a chillah, fasting, staying up at night in ibadat and making zikr. Hardly four days had elapsed when he experienced within his Ruh a special effulgence, a special ruhaniyet and nuraniyet, whereas he had not experienced anything previously after forty days of effort. He told his mother, "My observation turned out to be correct!"

Just ponder over this: When was the berry eaten? On the other hand we see that the situation where people are deliberately, out of choice and with knowledge

aforethought eating what is haram, but their conscience does not prick them. The reason is that light has, as yet, not entered their hearts that their conscience should prick them. If one takes clean, white clothes and a speck of ink or dirt were to fall on the clothes; one would become aware of this immediately. However, if the clothes are already filthy and full of stains, how will one become aware of that speck of ink or dirt? A normal reaction should be that these clothes are very dirty - do not use them as this will be most unbecoming. Do you now understand?

كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ

Do you now understand? The condition attached is that of "tayyib" - pure and full of goodness. Eat what is tayyib - consider this to be Allah Ta'ala's rizq (sustenance). What is rizq from Allah Ta'ala is tayyib, and what is haram is not rizq from Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala may have created it but it is not meant for you.

To recapitulate:

Iman has to be clothed with good deeds - these are the demands of Iman. Together with this it is necessary and compulsory to eat. It becomes necessary to adopt the means and the methods for attaining what one has to eat. What is initially wajib makes the means also wajib, so earning also becomes wajib.

Now, to earn a living in order to obtain one's rizq and food, there exist many means and methods. Amongst these is that of trade. Just as there is agriculture, artisanship and employment, there is trade as well. From my comments above, it should be apparent that this trade is also ibadat. This is a means of obtaining wealth, which is the means of obtaining food, which, in turn, is the means of making ibadat - so

trade and business also becomes ibadat. This commerce is not a "worldly" activity. It cannot be categorised as "dunya". It is also included in ibadat.

Virtues Of An Honest Trader

It comes in the Hadith Sharif that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has stated:

التاجر الصّدوق الأمين مع النّبيّين و الصدّيقين و الشّهداء

What more can one want? The trader - that person whom we consider to be involved in a "worldly" activity - who is truthful, honest and trustworthy will be, on the Day of Qiyamat, with the Ambiya (Messengers), the pious and the martyrs. Neither has this person fought in battle and become martyred, nor has he progressed to the stage of the siddiqin (pious), and one knows what an extremely high position is that of Nabuwat (Prophethood) yet Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) states that trade is a very elevated occupation. Doing business, many issues present contrary to one's temperament; there is much temptation towards greed and avarice in it; many do become greedy and avaricious. Turning one's tabiyet (temperament) away from these temptations and pitfalls, immersing in trade with honesty and trustworthiness, is a great mujahadah (struggle against the nafs). The rule is that the greater the mujahadah the greater the qurb-e-ilahi (closeness to Allah Ta'ala). Thus, even in this trade there is that much qurb-e-ilahi, and it is this qurb-e-ilahi that will result in this trader being with the Ambiya, the siddiqin and the shuhada' (martyrs). The task is small, the work is not much, but the reward and status and elevation and qurb are so high.

If trade is not ibadat then how can there be companionship with the Ambiya, the siddiqin and the shuhada'? The reason is that trade is a great ibadat. From this it is obvious that no work, no effort, of a Muslim is "worldly". Everything is Din.

Qissah of the Neighbour of Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA)

Hadhratwala related a qissah concerning Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA).When he passed away, somebody saw him in his dream and that he was in Jannat. He was happy and cheerful. This person asked him, "Hadhrat, how did you fare?" "Alhamdulillah, I was forgiven," was the reply. "Hadhrat, did you attain any elevated stages?" Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA) replied, "Alhamdulillah, I also managed to achieve elevated stages."

When we pass a way we are presented before Haqq Ta'ala. As you know that when a criminal is apprehended, there is first a pre-trial (kachhi-peshi) before the actual trial (pakki-peshi). When a visitor goes to the palace of a king as a guest, the visitor is first accommodated in the reception area before going to the royal court itself. Similarly, before the Day of Qiyamat, there is a "pre-trial" (kachhi-peshi) in the 'Alam-e-Barzakh (the world of departed souls). These comments are in answer to the question as to how are we presented before Allah Ta'ala? This is a brief explanation.

To continue: Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA) said, "I have been forgiven and been given the glad tidings of Jannat here in the 'Alam-e-Barzakh. I have also been granted high stages. However, I have been left behind by my fellow Muslim brother, my neighbour." The questioner was amazed at this comment. He said,

"Hadhrat, your neighbour who has passed away, was not known for any special deeds. We had never seen him make any special mujahadah, or carry out any special riyadhat (spiritual exercises), or ibadat like staying up at night in prayer, or make an excess of nafl namaaz, or keep optional fasts in abundance. We have not seen any of these. So, why has he excelled?"

Over there, realities (haqa'iq) come to the fore and present themselves. Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA) replied, "The fact of the matter is this: I was alone with no responsibilities: no wife, no dependants. I was care-free. So I busied myself with communicating with Allah Ta'ala. However, my neighbour was married and had a family to support. He was obliged to go and work so that he could support his family. Also, his nafs had certain rights on him:

إنّ لنفسك عليك حقا و لزوجك عليك حقا

Your nafs (life) has rights over you; your wife has rights over you.

"He was involved in his necessary ibadat, he kept way from haram, he fulfilled the rights others had on him, and it was on the basis of this taqwa, together with the intention and Dua that he made that ‘O Allah, free me as you have freed Junaid, so that I can also make your ibadat as he is doing,' that he achieved what he did."

To earn what is halaal tayyib is no ordinary achievement. While occupied in earning halaal this was his intention. It was because of his intention that he earned this high position. Allah Ta'ala was virtually saying, "My bondsman desired to make such ibadat as Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA). Even though he did not find the opportunity to do so, but he attained that reward based on his intention."

إنما الأعمال بالنيات

Deeds depend on the intention - Hadith Sharif.

Just ponder: To be involved in farming and watering the fields, or to be a labourer and earn in this manner and, simultaneously, make meager ibadat with taqwa, is a great ibadat. So, this trade is not "dunya" - it is also ibadat and a very great ibadat. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) stated that the trader will be with the Ambiya, the siddiqin and the shuhada. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) also said that when this trader comes home tired and exhausted after a day's work - running from here to there, fetching this and that - and falls asleep at night tired out, he sleeps completely forgiven. He has performed his Isha namaaz with Jama't (congregation) and he then performed his Fajr namaaz with Jama't, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) states that the whole night is written down for him as ibadat and forgiveness! On the night of the fifteenth of Shaban some are staying awake at night busy with nafl ibadat, they have visited the cemetery and recited Fatihah for the forgiveness of the deceased, but this trader, tired out from the day's work, is unable to keep awake and sleeps away, he still gets the thawaab (reward) of the virtues promised for the night of the fifteenth of Shaban!

Do you now understand what trade is?

It comes in the Hadith Sharif that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has stated that when this trader, being occupied with his business the whole day, comes home in the evening and places his foot in his house the mercy of Allah Ta'ala

descends much more on him. And Allah Ta'ala has a special muhabbat (affection) for him.

Raha'ish, Asa'ish, Ziba'ish, Numa'ish

The seeking of a livelihood has a number of degrees. The first is fardh (compulsory), the second is mustahab (optional), the third is mubah (neither mustahab nor haram) and the fourth is haram (impermissible/ forbidden).

That person who has nothing to eat and is in abject poverty and is destitute, for him to seek an income is fardh. This stage is referred to as raha'ish. This stage is fardh - to attain that much is compulsory

If the person has sufficient to eat twice a day, but he desires to have something more, so that he can eat with some comfort, then for him to earn that much more is mustahab. This stage is referred to as Asa'ish, meaning comfort. After the stage of raha'ish comes the stage of asa'ish.

This will apply not only to food and drink, but will apply to clothes, to food and drink, to housing, and so forth. Applying these stages to housing we have the following: Having a small house which will provide shelter from the rain and the wind, from the cold and the heat, would be at the level of the first stage of raha'ish: One's needs have been fulfilled. Having a house providing some comfort in addition to providing the basic necessities would fall into the next stage of asa'ish. (By the way, these words I am using were coined by Hadhratwala (RA). He had a habit of rhyming his words.)

This second stage of asa'ish - to earn that much as to be in comfort - is mustahab. To earn so that one has more than the basic necessities and be comfortable and have the means to be at ease, will cause one to have peace of mind. The ibadat that is performed now will also be with peace of mind and tranquility (sukun). Otherwise it will be the situation of:

Evil income will result in an evil heart.

And if the heart is filled with evil the person's deeds will be evil.

So, to strive in work in order to attain some comfort and ease (asa'ish) would be mustahab.

Necessities Of Life

The necessities of life are: to have food, clothes and a house to stay in.

The third stage is that of ziba'ish, also referred to as zinat - elegance/ adornment. Food should be delicious as well. The clothes should be presentable as well. The house should be elegant. There is some decorative work. These features, over and above the level of comfort, are termed zinat. This would then be mubah. A mubah act is one for which there is neither reward nor punishment.

When I went to London, before my previous trip here to South Africa, I saw that they had carpets laid on the floors of their toilets. I was quite amazed at this, not having seeing this done before. My initial reaction was, "What unnecessary expenditure! What a waste of money!" This was just a thought. I enquired, "There are carpets in the rooms, where we walk with our shoes, but why are there carpets

in the toilet as well?" They explained, "Mawlana, the cold here is intense. You will find thick wallpaper hanging on the walls and the floors will have carpets. If these were not there, and one were to walk barefoot on the floor, the cold enters the body and one will get sick. These are methods used to ward off the cold and to protect ourselves."

Just see: What we had thought was an act of show (numa'ish), what we had thought was an indication of pride and arrogance (takabbur) - may Allah Ta'ala protect us from sin, as the thought of sin is also sin, thinking evil of others (bid-gumani) is also a sin - turned out to have a sound basis. Now I understood. The carpet was in the category of necessities. At the most it would fall in the category of asa'ish. It does not fall into the category of zinat and ziba'ish. However, even it was done for beautification and for decorative purposes, then it would be mubah.

There are thus three categories of earning discussed so far: the first of fardh, the second mustahab and the third of mubah. Yes, the fourth category of earning would be Haraam. Possibly there are those who did not know this. Is there a category of earning that is fardh, a category that is mustahab and a category that is mubah? Offo! This is an amazing elucidation! And there is a fourth category of earning and this is Haraam. This category is that of numa'ish. This is to do something for show; to impress others; to do something out of pride and arrogance; to show one's high social status in the eyes of others. This is all Haraam. One should not have this intention (niyet). One can have any of the other three intentions - they would all be permissible. The first is fardh, the other two are permissible, that of mustahab and mubah. There is no sin attached to these two.

One aspect that should be obvious to you after knowing the different stages is that we are referring to those earnings which are earned by halaal means. One has to attain halaal rizq. That is why that person who earns a living with the intention of fulfilling the waajib rights on himself, his family and dependents, so that he can feed and clothe them, and, besides this, he also has the intention of seeing to the needs and the welfare, from time to time, of the poor and destitute, and also of his neighbours, that he may attend their needs and comfort, and that is the reason why he is exerting himself more and more in earning, it comes in the Hadith Shareef that such a trader's face will shine more beautifully than the brilliance of the moon of the fourteenth night on the Day of Qiyaamat!

So, just see: the trader sleeps in a state in which he is forgiven; Allah Ta'ala is happy with the trader; the trader's face will outshine the brilliance of the moon of the fourteenth night on the Day of Qiyaamat - but which trader is being referred to? It is that trader mentioned in the Hadith Shareef I had quoted:

It is that trader who does not betray the trust placed in him and does not deceive others during his business and transactions with others. The virtues mentioned above refer to this category of trader. Do not for a moment question: What will I sell and what will I earn by using halaal means? It is stated in the Hadith Shareef that those earnings that have come through deceitful and impermissible means, may appear to roll in and come in abundance, but in the end the result is that of loss and destruction. There is no barkat (blessing) in that wealth. Money will be seen to be coming in but how it disappears will not be perceived.

Qissah Of The Bamboo-Seller

Hadhratwala (RA) mentioned that there was a person in Kanpur who started a business selling bamboo. (Hadhratwala (RA) had stayed in Kanpur for some time. He taught at the madrassah there for fourteen years.) This businessman had taqwa in him. The mas'alah (ruling) is that if there is a fault in any item you are selling, you should reveal it to the buyer. Bamboo may have holes, or various other defects. Reveal these to the customer. Similarly, clothes or other items, may have defects which the customer may not be aware of. The trader knows these and he should tell the customer. According to the defect the price of the item will also be less. So, this businessman selling bamboo, used to point out to the customers that this particular bamboo has this problem, that that bamboo has this particular defect and shortcoming in it but the other bamboo was of good quality. The price of the former was less and the price of the latter was more. Because of his forthright manner, his business was not flourishing. The other adjacent bamboo-sellers who did not have this taqwa and did not exercise this precaution, saw his plight and mocked at him. They said, "Is this the way to make business, that you mention such things to the customers and do not make a sale and get no profits? This is definitely not the way to do business!" However, this bamboo-seller was of an honourable temperament and "sidiqul-amin" (as in the Hadith Shareef above) and carried on as he used to.

But, dear brothers, after the buyers developed confidence and trust in him, his business picked up and the business of the others began to wane. This person's business flourished to such an extent that the business of the others virtually

collapsed. He became very wealthy. If a person acts according to the Shariat with taqwa, and he remains steadfast, that he should find himself in straitened conditions? This can never be!

Imam Abu Hanifah (RA) And The Roll Of Faulty Cloth

Imam Abu Hanifah (RA) was a cloth merchant running a flourishing business. This trade was a family trade that had been running in the family from the time of his grandfather. He had inherited his shop from his father's inheritance. The shop was huge and he had employees as well. Buyers used to come to the shop to buy but he also had a worker who used to take the cloth to the marketplace to sell. On this one occasion a worker was sent out with some bales of cloth to sell. One roll of cloth had a defect in it. Imam Abu Hanifah (RA) instructed the worker that if anybody wished to buy this cloth it should be pointed out to him that the cloth has a defect. The worker took the cloth and went to sell it. When the cloth was sold, this particular roll was also sold. When he returned, he gave the details of his sales to Imam Abu Hanifah (RA) and handed over the money received. On being handed the money Imam Abu Hanifah (RA) enquired, "When you sold that particular roll of cloth, did you reveal the defect to the buyer?" The worker said, "Hadhrat, I forgot! I did not point out the defect. I sold that cloth for such-and-such an amount." Imam Abu Hanifah (RA) said, "That money has now become intermingled - halaal and Haraam have now become mixed. It does not behove us to utilise this money." The entire proceeds - the entire amount that had been realised from the sale of all the bales of cloth, amounting to thousands - he gave away in charity!

These virtues which have been explained, and what has been shown and proven that trade is not dunya, that trade is also Din, and Din is also ibaadat, and ibaadat has some rules and regulations governing it, and that trader that takes all this into consideration, and is involved in trade, his stage is very high. What can be higher than that one should be in the company of the Ambiya (AS), in the company of the siddiqin, in the company of the shuhada'; sleeping at night he is forgiven; the mercy of Allah Ta'ala descends on him; Allah Ta'ala shows muhabbat towards him; and on the Day of Qiyaamat his face will shine brighter than the fourteenth moon?

However, my dear friends, brothers and buzurgs , having listened to the virtues working and of earning, do not criticise such personages who have restrained themselves from working. They are not involved in seeking a livelihood. The condition attached to seeking a livelihood is that it should be halaal. The Hadith Shareef states quite categorically:

طلب كسب الحلال فريضة بعد الفريضة

Seeking of a halaal livelihood is fardh after the fardh of ibaadat.

It is apparent that the basic fardh is the fardh of ibaadat. And seeking a livelihood is merely an instrument to fulfil the fardh of ibaadat. And it should not happen that what is the means is made into the primary objective, and the primary objective is relegated to a secondary position, that the primary objective of ibaadat is discarded and one is occupied mainly in trade. This is topsy-turvy - the objective has been

discarded and the means has been made into the objective; what is primary is made secondary and what is secondary is made primary.

For example: When we wake up in the morning, our first fardh is this that we should cleanse ourselves by means of wudhu and proceed to the masjid - provided that the masjid is not at a distance - and perform our Fajr namaaz with Jamaat. The order for namaaz is that whichever namaaz that we have been ordered to perform - i.e. the five obligatory prayers - should be performed in whatever time - i.e. the stipulated times - in the prescribed manner - i.e. with Jamaat - in whichever place - i.e. in the masjid - provided that there is no Shar'i excuse. This is the order we have to obey first on waking up in the morning. Thereafter we have to fulfil the other fardh of seeking a livelihood by involving ourselves in work.

The Status Of Tawakkul Is Higher

However, if some bandah (bondsman) of Allah Ta'ala keeps himself occupied only in the fardh of ibaadat and pays no attention to seeking a halaal livelihood - how can a person be engaged in two occupations at the same time? - and he is a zahid (an ascetic), one should not level any criticism at him, as we see being done. People say, "What has happened to him that he has broken his arms and legs and sits in the masjid? Can't he go out and work? We have heard many virtues of earning a livelihood." Undoubtedly, that is true. For me and you this is true. However, for that person in whose heart Allah Ta'ala has instilled the strength of taqwa - that person whose gaze is not on means - and he does not utilise these, and, with strength of heart, he places his trust completely on Allah Ta'ala - which is

termed tawakkul, for which there are certain pre-conditions, which he has attained already - his status is much higher than the one going out to seek a livelihood. It comes in the Hadith Shareef that that person who is so busy in the tilawat (recitation) of the Qur'an Shareef that he has not one free moment from his tilawat, Allah Ta'ala says that he has no need to earn a livelihood and that He will be sufficient to see to his needs, to that extent that he does not even need to free himself to make du'a. Du'a is also a methodology. Allah Ta'ala is saying, "Do not even make du'a. I am sufficient for you."

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللهِ وَكَفَى بِاللهِ وَكِيلًا

And put thy trust in Allah. Allah is sufficient as Trustee. (33:48)

The status of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is very high and noble. One should think twice before criticising. What work did he undertake? Before Nabuwat, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to take the goods of Hadhrat Khadijag (RA) and sold these for her, but after Nabuwat can anybody prove his going out to earn a living? What trade was he involved in? What agricultural activity did he undertake? Whose employment did he seek? What profession or method did he employ to accumulate wealth? None. It was "Tawakkul-alallah."

Among the Na'ibane-Rasul (representatives of Rasululluh Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), if such representatives are to be found in the Ummat, if they and those associated with them - their wives and their children - have in their hearts this strength of Tawakkul-alallah, then nobody can criticise them. Nobody can find

fault with them. They do not go out to earn a living, but do not criticise them. Should they ever come to your door to beg from, you may feel justified in telling them off, but remember that you will be destroying your Din. In fact, they do not go to anybody to beg, because then how could this be Tawakkul-alallah? To go to somebody's threshold is contrary to the concept of Tawakkul-alallah. At times a weakness does creep in and mistakes are made. Two qissas come to mind.

Lesson From A Dog

(This qissah appears in one of the Arabic kitubs - Nafhatul Yemen.)

One person opted for Tawakkul-alallah and went into the mountains to spend his life in ibaadat. Food kept on coming to him. Allah Ta'ala placed a test on him and the food stopped coming. One mealtime passed without any food. The second mealtime passed without any food. The third mealtime also passed but still no food. This person became gabbrified - worried and anxious. In this unsettled state he came down the mountain and went to the nearby town. He approached the house of a Christian woman and asked for food. She gave him three rotis. Taking these, he started walking away from the house. The Christian woman had a dog. The dog followed him. As they reached the outskirts of the town the dog started barking at him and leapt at him as if he wanted to bite him on his leg. The buzurg threw down one roti at the dog. The dog went after the roti and started to eat it. As soon as it had eaten the roti the dog went after him again. Barking again he charged for his leg. The buzurg threw another roti at him. The dog ate the second roti and charged after him again. The buzurg, in his fright, threw the last roti at him. He had

received three rotis and he lost all three rotis, having thrown all three to the dog. The dog ate the third roti and again charged at him. The dog was on the point of biting him when this aabid (one devoted to ibaadat) addressed the dog, "O Shameless Creature! I had obtained three rotis from the house of your owner and I have given all three to you, so why do you still wish to attack me, O Shameless One?" Allah Ta'ala wanted the buzurg to learn a lesson and gave the dog the power of speech. The dog said, "Am I shameless or are you shameless? I had chosen to lie at the threshold of my master's house and there were many a times when my master forgot to give me food. At times, days went by without my receiving any food, but I never left the threshold of my master. But you, having missed out on merely three meals, left the threshold of your Real Master and came begging to the door of my master! Am I shameless or are you shameless?" Allah Ta'ala taught him a lesson through the dog. This also happens.

Each According To His Status

Hadhrat Ibrahim Bin Adham (RA) was a king. He is a well-known figure. Ask him what did he attain by giving up his kingdom and choosing the Path of Faqeeri (the path of the Mendicants - i.e Tasawwuf). He had tasted the delight of both these domains. The wazir approached him to resume his kingship, saying, "The door is still open for you to rule. Please return." He replied, "I have no need of it." He must have found a better substitute. He carried on along his journey. Night came and he stopped over at a particular spot. Allah Ta'ala sent some food for him. The food was very delicious, of high quality and very fragrant. In the same vicinity there lived on the mountainside another poor buzurg. He had been there for several

years. Allah Ta'ala used to send him food daily as well but his food was very simple. On witnessing what had been sent to Hadhrat Ibrahim Bin Adham (RA), he thought to himself, "I have been here for so many years, having left off worldly affairs - having become a tarik-e-dunya - I have been engaged in the ibaadat of Allah Ta'ala, and I get only simple food whereas that person is having food so delicious and appetising that its aroma is reaching me even!" Very perplexed, he addressed Allah Ta'ala, "Wah, Allah-Mia, Wah! I am an aabid for so many years and I receive only this food, whereas that person just came today and he has such delicious and excellent food?" Allah Ta'ala instilled into his heart by way of ilhaam, "That is correct. You have just seen the superficial aspect. You have not taken account into account who he was and who you were."

Let me just digress to point out the following: People speak of "equality". The cry is, "Equality! Equality!" Equality is not a factor even by Allah Ta'ala. Even He does not deal with everybody on an equal basis. He is the Khaliq (Creator) of everybody and deals with everybody according to his status, taking into account factors like temperament and disposition.

To continue: Allah Ta'ala went on, "He was a king. He set aside his crown for My sake. You, on the other hand, were a grass-cutter, earning your livelihood by cutting grass. This food you are receiving is far better than what you used to eat. This other person, what he has left aside, how will he tolerate the food you are eating? If you are unhappy, your hoe and basket, which you had left behind, are still there. You may climb off the mountainside, reclaim your hoe and basket, cut grass and sell it and eat!" However, having being making the zikr of Allah Ta'ala

for so long, there had developed a very beautiful relationship with Allah Ta'ala. This person became penitent, "I have erred. I had not realised what the real situation was."

What work was he doing? None. He was assisted by Allah Ta'ala from the Unseen. If a person has Tawakkul-alallah, with strength of heart in oneself and those connected to one, then it is not necessary to adopt any external means of livelihood. To the contrary, these are people who are there to distribute - to take and give the best of things to others and not to take for themselves. I am attempting to refute a criticism. People tend to say, "Whatever people we have seen who are muttaqi and parezghar (fearing Allah Ta'ala and abstinent), we have seen that they are dying of hunger. Neither do they posses proper food nor do they have presentable clothes, nor a decent house to stay in! What type of muttaqi, what type of Auliyaa Allah, what type of Allahwale are they? We are better off than them. If Allah Ta'ala was pleased with them then He would have given them more than us." Being Muslim, for a Muslim to make such statements...? This is similar to the statements hurled at Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) by the kuffar of the Quraish of Makkah. One should make taubah (ask to be forgiven by Allah Ta'ala). For a kaafir (non-believer) to mouth such statements is to be expected, but for a mu'min to say such things...? Remember very well that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had no shortages. He was told, "If you so wish, I will convert the mountains of Uhud into gold for you." His reply was, "No. I prefer to eat at one time and the kitchen fire should be cold at another."[1] There was a reason for this

also. However, the point is that Allah Ta'ala made the offer to him, but the bondsman, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), was not in favour.

Similarly, as for the Auliyaa Allah - those who are true walis - they have no shortages. But they themselves decline. Why get involved in arguments and fights? Why have the burden of keeping accounts? Why have the worry of having to make Qurbani and pay zakat? Then the worry of spending the money correctly. These are distractions, diverting attention in another direction. Seeing their weaknesses they make du'a, "O Allah! We do not desire wealth." Allah Ta'ala wanted to give them, but they declined.

On the other hand there were such bandah of Allah Ta'ala, Auliyaa Allah, to whom Allah Ta'ala offered wealth and their response was, "Certainly, I will gladly accept! I shall keep proper records. I will see to the poor and destitute, fulfil my obligations of qurbani, fitrah and zakat. I will attend to the destitute and see to their needs and welfare. Bring forth Your bounties."

Abdul Qadir Jilani (RA) Buys An Expensive Material

Gauthe-Pak, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (RA), was blessed by Allah Ta'ala with a great deal of wealth and he accepted. He used to eat murg-pulao - a chicken and rice delicacy - daily. It is well known among the Auliyaa Allah that the excellent food he ate and exquisite clothes he wore, no other wali has ever ate or worn. There is an incident related about him:

A cloth merchant went to the king to sell some cloth. This material was so expensive that the king could not afford to buy it from his personal funds. The

merchant left without the king buying the cloth. Being in Baghdad, the merchant decided to pay a visit to Gauthe-Pak, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (RA). During the course of their conversation Gauthe-Pak (RA) asked him the reason for his visit to Baghdad. The merchant explained that it was a business trip. What was he selling? Cloth. Gauthe-Pak (RA) requested him to bring forth his material so that he could also see it. When he saw it so happened that the very cloth the king could not afford to buy because of insufficient funds, Gauthe-Pak (RA) expressed the wish to buy it. The merchant said, "Huzur (Sir), forgive me for saying this, but this cloth is so expensive that even the king could not afford to buy it." Gauthe-Pak (RA) could afford it and he gave him the required sum and bought the material. The tailor was then summoned and the cloth was given to him to sew a chogah[2] for him. The king came to know of this whole affair and he became infuriated. He told the wazir, "What I could not afford to buy, Abdul Qadir has bought? This is an insult to me! Go and question him about it!" The wazir went and met Gauthe-Pak (RA). They were still sitting and chatting when the khadim-e-khas (special attendant) came and addressed Gauthe-Pak (RA), "Huzur! That cloth that you had given for the chogah to be sewn is insufficient and there is not enough material to complete the one sleeve. How shall we complete the sewing of the sleeve?" Gauthe-Pak (RA) said, "Is that so? Well, it is not a problem. Go to my room and you will find lying there a piece of hessian cloth. Take this hessian to the tailor and tell him to join it up to complete the sleeve."

Just ponder: What was the quality and value of that material and what was the quality and value of the hessian? But in his eyes, gold and silver were equal to

pieces of broken clay-pot. He did not buy the cloth for purpose of showing off, for numa'ish. (Just now I had explained to you the four different levels.) He bought it for refreshing the ruhanayet of the heart and as a sign of Shukr for a blessing (ne'mat) that was showered on him by Allah Ta'ala. It comes in the Hadith Shareef words to the effect that Allah Ta'ala states, "When I see on my bondsman the effects of My blessings, then I am happy with him."Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has pointed out that when Allah Ta'ala sees the effects of His ne'mats (blessings) on the body of his bondsman He becomes happy. This person has valued the ne'mat.

The wazir became ‘gabbrified ‘- anxious and frightened. He thought to himself, "Is this person one to be questioned on his actions? In his eyes the expensive cloth and the hessian held equal value. No. He did not buy the cloth out of pride and conceit or out of arrogance. He had a ne'mat of Allah Ta'ala with him and he bought it to express his Shukr-lillah. (Gratitude to Allah Ta'ala)" He remained silent and did not pursue the matter. When he returned he told the king, "Huzur, there is a major difference in temperaments between us and him in regard to niyet (intention)." "What is that?" the king asked. The wazir said, "Such an expensive piece of cloth, which you yourself saw, was sewn into a chogah but there was not enough material to complete the sleeve. Hadhrat then instructed, ‘Take that piece of hessian cloth and join it up.'" The king was also completely amazed at hearing this.

The excellent food that Hadhrat Gauthe-Pak (RA) had eaten and the fine clothes that he had worn was unmatched by others. And what was his status? He was

among the great Auliyaa Allah: His status was higher than that of the Abdaals. In fact, the rank of Abdaaliat is distributed from the Gauth.

The Piety Of Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA)

The honoured father of our Hadhratwala (RA) [i.e. the father of Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA)] was a landowner and had some good properties. After his demise, when the properties had to be distributed, there arose some doubt in Hadhratwala (RA) concerning the share that he would inherit. He asked Mawlana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) on the permissibility of taking the property. Mawlana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) replied, "If you take it, it is a fatwa, and if you do not take it is taqwa." [That is, the legal ruling would be that it is permissible to take the property, but not to take the property would be an act of piety.] Consequently Hadhratwala (RA) did not take the property. For a short time he also suffered abject poverty. So much so that visitors used to come and were fed while husband and wife went to bed without food. Such a time was also experienced. However, thereafter, dear brethren, when the ne'mats of Allah Ta'ala started showering, it was like royalty! Once, a very large sum of money came to him. Hadhratwala (RA) became gabbrified. "What shall I do with this?" he exclaimed anxiously. After some thought he said, "My heart desires that I send one thousand rupees to Deoband Madrassah and one thousand rupees to Saharanpur Madrassah." What was the level of Hadhratwala's fairness and justice? These were of the highest degree. His taqwa was of a very elevated level. His life was led at a very high level of caution and vigilance. Yet, what trade was he involved in? What agricultural activity did he undertake? Whose employment was he in at a later stage? Where

was there a desire to accumulate wealth? Where was their any sign of greed and avarice? He distributed everything. The poor of Thana Bhowan, orphans and widows were given a monthly allowance, which was noted down in a book. Some came forward to collect this allowance themselves; others had the allowance sent to their homes.

His Fairness And Justice - Qissah Of The Two Melons

His fairness and justice? Allahu-Akbar! Once a peasant farmer brought two melons and gave it to Hadhratwala (RA), "One was enough. Why was it necessary to bring two?" In the simple straightforward manner of the rural people the peasant replied, "Who does not know that you have two wives? The one is for the one wife and the other is for the other." Hadhratwala (RA) said, "Very well. But, dear brother, they should be exactly equal." Just take note that the melons should be exactly equal in order that the one wife receives exactly the same as the other wife.

Many people have a great desire to marry a second wife. In fact, Badi Pirani Sahibah - Hadhratwala's (RA) first wife - once remarked to Hadhratwala (RA), "By marrying a second wife you have opened the road for your muridin to marry second wives also!" Hadhratwala (RA) replied, "To the contrary, I have closed the road!" She said, "Closed the road? In which manner?" Hadhratwala (RA) said, "My muridin witness all the time how I treat both of you with complete fairness and justice. Every item is shared equally between the two of you. If some parcel is tied in a string and is given to me then the item is divided equally. For measuring there is a scale present in the khanqah. Also, that very string is cut and given

equally to the two of you. What goes to one goes to the other." Nowadays even one wife is not treated with fairness and justice, so how will justice be done between two wives?

To continue: The peasant responded, "I know you. You are particular about being equal; therefore I have weighed both melons before coming. You can weigh them and see for yourself. There is your scale." Hadhratwala (RA) weighed the melons and, really, they were of equal weight! Hadhratwala (RA) then said, "Fine. The are of equal weight. But show me, out of the two which is the sweeter one and which is not so sweet?"

Just ponder: To what degree is there fairness and justice? To what extent is there mujahadah with the nafs? To what extent is there riyadhat? How much effort is not undertaken?

The peasant said, "You draw very fine lines! Did I thrust myself into them? I do not know." Hadhratwala (RA) said, "Not to worry." He took a knife and cut both the melons in half, setting one half of each melon into the one pan of the scale and the other half of each melon into the other pan. Adjusting them until they were equal he sent one set to the one wife and the other set to the other wife. Now there was equality. What an extremely high level of taqwa does this not demonstrate!

There are certain topics that are not suitable to be discussed in public gatherings, but the masha'ikh will mention them. Mawlana Gangohi (RA) had discussed some amazing topics in his majlis, topics that appear to be contrary to modesty. In any case, what has been narrated above is amazing in itself. Yet there is more. I am

attempting to show you the qualities of our Akabir (pious elders) who preceded us. Hadhratwala (RA) used to say - and in this there was no boasting but an invitation to simulate - "When I am having marital relations with my one wife I consider it Haraam to hold the picture in my mind of my second wife at that particular time - I see that a mental image of her's should not come." Hadhratwala's (RA) one wife was a bit elderly and the second wife was of a younger, youthful age. There is a big difference in the mental images and the imaginings pertaining to the two. Hadhratwala (RA) used to say, "These are very fine points. To control one's thoughts is very difficult. But I consider it to be Haraam and I avoid this visualising. "

Of course, the other mas'alah is in its place, namely that the gaze of a person, coming from the shopping centre, falls on some attractive and beautiful woman and her image now sits in his brain, and at night, or at any other time, he has marital relations with his wife, and he brings forth that image to ignite and increase his passion. Though he is having relations with his wife, yet he is guilty of having committed the sin of zina (adultery)! Yes, he has committed the sin of zina!

Shah Abdul-Quddus Gangohi (RA) And The Ta'wiz Of Barkat

To continue. We were discussing the topic of asbaab (means). If certain personages have not made use of the means (asbaab) and have not resorted to the recognised methods of earning a livelihood, we should not criticise them. They have no need of using means. Their lives were that of tawakkul. Their wives and children were also on tawakkul. Shah Abdul-Quddus Gangohi (RA) at times had no food to eat.

Occasionally he used to go into the house and then sit down and say to himself, "It is the misfortune of Abdul-Quddus that he has to stay hungry because of his sins, but the wife is also staying hungry." Very occasionally his wife used to complain and he used to reassure her, "Make a little sabr - have patience and fortitude. Excellent and delicious food is being prepared in Jannat!" If we were to say the same thing to our wives, they would say, "What is being prepared in Jannat you eat - give me my food here to eat!" However, his wife was also of that calibre and level of tawakkul and she was also able to dispense with means. Once it so happened that Shah Abdul-Quddus (RA) was away on a journey and his Sheikh came to visit. At the time there was no food in the house to eat at all. The servant scurried about here and there hoping to find some flour. The Sheikh sensed something was not right. He enquired, "What is the problem?" She said, "Huzur, there is nothing to eat. I am trying to find some flour." He took out a rupee and gave it to her. "Go and buy some flour and prepare something. I shall then eat." She did this and he ate what was prepared. He then wrote out a ta'wiz (amulet) and said, "Place this in what you have bought, Insha-Allah, there will be barkat (blessings)." He then left. In the days that followed there was food twice a day. A worried Shah Abdul-Quddus (RA) asked his wife, "What is happening? Why are we not without food?" She explained, "Your Sheikh came the day you were gone out. There was no food in the house. He gave some money for food and left a ta'wiz to be placed in the grain. This is the barkat of that ta'wiz." Shah Abdul-Quddus (RA) said, "Is that so? It is disrespectful to keep such a ta'wiz in the grain. It deserves to be kept on my head and not in the grain. Where is it?" He went inside

and took it out and placed it in the turban on his head. After a few days the grain was used up.

Mawlana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) Is Given A Kimiya

Mawlana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) was given a kimiya by a majzub. Mawlana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) took it and placed it on a shelf in the house. The majzub passed by a few days later and commented drily to Mawlana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA), "Wah, Molvi, Wah! Your have lost it, haven't you?" When Mawlana went to check he found that, in fact, it was missing! Somebody had thought that it was just an ordinary bit of grass and threw it away!

These were our Akaabir buzurgs! Their gaze was not in this direction but directed at tawakkul. They were ones who distributed and did not accumulate.

I shall end off by relating a few other qissas:

Shah Alamgir (RA) And His Brother, Dara Shiku

After Shah Jahan, his son Shah Alamgir (RA) was due to take over the thrown. His brother, Dara Shiku felt he should be the one to wear the crown. Dara Shiku went to visit a buzurg. The buzurg welcomed him and, shifting from the quilt on which he was sitting, requested the young prince to come and sit there. The buzurg was acting according to the Hadith Shareef which states that on should treat every person according to his status. Dara Shiku declined, "Huzur, who am I?" Out of respect for the buzurg he was hesitant to sit at the sitting place of the buzurg, on his very quilt, whereas one should not be rash enough to refuse. One should obey as

instructed - there is goodness in this. But Dara Shiku did not do this and he went to sit in front. They conversed with one another. As Dara Shiku took his leave he requested, "Huzur, make du'a that I receive the crown and that I become the king." The buzurg replied, "That was my wish as well but what can I do...? Anyhow, very well, I shall make du'a for you." He did not want to hurt his feelings - anybody's feelings. Hurting people's feelings was something he could never do. "Very well. I shall make du'a for you." Dara Shiku departed.

Shah Alamgir (RA) came to find out about his brother's visit to the buzurg. Shah Alamgir (RA) was a great Muhaddith (Scholar of Hadith Shareef). He also went to pay a visit to the buzurg. The buzurg saw the prince enter and again shifted from his quilt and said, "Honoured Prince, come and sit here." Shah Alamgir (RA) did not hesitate, "Very well." He went to sit on the quilt that the buzurg had vacated for him. They conversed with one another. As Shah Alamgir (RA) took his leave he requested, "Huzur, it is my desire that I receive the crown and become ruler." The buzurg replied, "You have it already!" In what way? The buzurg had offered him his quilt to sit on and he had done so! Shah Alamgir (RA) instantly saw the relationship. He said quickly, "Hadhrat, this is only one half of it and not the whole. I may have the throne but I have not been crowned." The buzurg replied, "Bhai, that is not in my hands. That slave of yours - the one that fills water in a jug for you to make wudhu - it is in his hands." Shah Alamgir (RA) thanked him and departed.

On reaching home he immediately ordered his slave, "Bring water for me to make wudhu!" The slave brought the water. Shah Alamgir (RA) took off the turban from

his head and placed it on one side on a pedestal and he performed his wudhu. On completing his wudhu he ordered the slave, "Take this turban of mine and place it on my head!" The slave said, "Huzur, have mercy on me! Please excuse me, as I have never done it before. Your honoured turban should be touched by my lowly hands..?" Shah Alamgir (RA) spoke in a severe tone, "I order you to do it! Take it and place it on my head!" The slave had no option but to obey the command. "Very well." He took the turban and placed on Shah Alamgir's (RA) head. The slave then said, "You received the throne over there and you have received the crown over here. However, our secrets have been exposed. It is not proper that I remain here. Huzur, I request you to set me free." Shah Alamgir

(RA) said, "I am setting you free. You may go."

Who was this unknown person? A mere slave! What was in his power? The authority to crown! The throne was given by the one buzurg over there and the crown was received from the one over here. Yet, neither of the two had any worldly occupation. They were not doing any farming. They were not involved in business and trade. They were not employees. Their stage and level was that of Tawakkul-alallah.

Shah Abdul Aziz (RA) And The English Governor

It was during the time of British rule in India that the English Governor came to meet Shah Abdul Aziz (RA), the son of Shah Waliyullah (RA). The Governor's head had no ruhuniyet in it but was filled only with materialism. Shah Abdul Aziz (RA) was never involved in any business or sought any employment, and had no

lack of food. The Governor was quick to notice that he had no obvious sources of income and of sustenance, so he asked, "How do you manage to eat?" Shah Abdul Aziz (RA) evaded the question and gave no reply. Later, when about to leave, the Governor took out some silver coins from his pocket and presented them to Shah Abdul Aziz (RA), saying, "Huzur, please accept this gift."Shah Abdul Aziz (RA) said, "Very well." He took the money and immediately remarked, "This is how I eat!"

Shah Abdul Qadar Sahib (RA) Refuses A Gift

Shah Abdul Qadar Sahib (RA) is among those personages who had no worldly occupation but who lived a royal life. A person brought a collection of korya to Shah Sahib, who thought to himself, "This appears to be a poor person. How can I take these korya from him?" He did not take the gift. This person left, taking his gift with him. Subsequent to this, the presents and gifts that used to pour in, ceased. A stage came when Shah Sahib had no food even. He thought to himself, "What has happened?" The answer suddenly struck him, "That person who had brought the korya which I refused to take... I hurt his feelings! This is a result of that refusal of mine!" He sent his servant to call this person. When he came Shah Sahib said to him, "Bhai, at that time you gladly brought it. Now I am actually begging for it." This person said, "Hadhrat, I had brought it out of pure muhabbat (love). I had meticulously collected the korya one by one for you. When Hadhrat refused, I thought I would wait for the opportunity and present it to you again at a more appropriate occasion. Although I have had need for it, I have not touched it and have kept it intact." Shah Sahib said, "Bhai, go and bring it." He brought it and

Shah Sahib accepted it. The paths opened up again. Shah Sahib was involved in the work of Din. He was involved in serving the Din of Allah Ta'ala with sincerity (ikhlaas) and honesty (sadaqat) and Allah Ta'ala opened the paths for him again. Whosoever becomes Allah's, Allah Ta'ala becomes his.

A Sincere Student's Arrangements For Food

Qari Panipati (RA) was well known for his qira't (the science of recitation of the Qur'an Shareef). Initially he was a Qari only, but later became a Molvi as well. A Mawlana went to him to learn qira't. QariSahib told him, "Bhai, first make arrangements for your meals and then come for your lessons." The Mawlana said, "Huzur, I have come to correct my tajwid (the correct pronunciation) of the Qur'an Shareef, purely for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. Food He will give. I am not requesting you for food. I merely request you to teach me." QariSahib acceded, "Very well." One mealtime came and went and a second mealtime came and went, but there was no food forthcoming. The people in the neighbourhood were also not bothered. After taking his lesson the Mawlana went to stay in the nearby masjid. It so happened that one person in the neighbourhood passed away. This qissah was related to us by Hadhratwala (RA). He also made the following pertinent and concise statements. "There should be ikhlas (sincerity) for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. If there is ikhlaas where can there be iflaas (poverty)? Where there is khulus (sincerity) there is much fulus (money)." There was a local custom to feed the needy for forty days whenever anyone passes away. Otherwise nobody bothered about caring for the Mawlana. The Mawlana ate well for these forty days. At times he was sent some halwa, at other times some meat and roti, and so forth. When the

forty days were over, news came that somebody else had passed away. Again there was food for the next forty days! When these forty days came to an end, news again came that somebody else had passed away! The people in the neighbourhood came to realise that every forty days somebody was passing away! They said, "Let us make arrangements for meals for the youngster or else everybody in the neighbourhood will die off!" The arrangements were made and thereafter the sequence of deaths stopped! It was as if Allah Ta'ala was saying, "If you do not make arrangements for such a bondsman of Mine, I will make the arrangements through your hands!"

In Conclusion

What I had said initially was that seeking a halaal earning is fardh after the other fara'idh is for me and you. This does not apply to those who are true Na'ib-e-Rasul (deputies of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), those who have khulus in the true sense of the word, who have tawakkul, with the necessary strength of heart in themselves and those connected to them. These means, whether of trade or agriculture or employment, are asbaabe-gair-adiyah - means are a habit but not a necessity. It is not an absolute rule that earnings will only accrue through trade, farming and employment. That is why one should not criticise those who dispense with these means. The ayet and the Hadith Shareef that I have quoted is for me and you. I have tried to show that many talks and lecture have been given on the topics of wudhu, namaaz and rozah, but concerning clothes and food, which we consider to be ‘worldly' topics, not much has been said. It is apparent that these are not worldly topics but form very much part of Din.

It is the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala that I have managed to discuss these topics. It is also a manifestation of your muhabbat and khulus. Those who know me know how very weak I am and that I suffer from dizzy spells and am unable to sit for long periods.

Today I have discussed briefly the subject of earning halaal and the associated virtues. Do not consider it to be dunya but consider it to be Din, making sure that you have the niyet (intention) of earning by halaal means. In the gaze of Allah Ta'ala that trader will be a loved one (mehboob); it will also be a source of showering of blessings (rehmat); it will be a means of being forgiven as well, as he sleeps at night exhausted from his day's efforts. On the Day of Qiyaamat his face will be shining bright like that of the glittering moon. It comes in the Hadith Shareef that nine parts of rehmat and barkat are kept in trade and one part in other occupations. You have also seen that the status of the Ambiya (AS), the martyrs (shuhada') and the siddiqin are attained by this trader, provided that he is earning halaal. From this you will realise that, as far as we are concerned, for a mu'min everything is Din and not dunya.

Allah Ta'ala has stated:

مَا طَيِّبَاتِ مِنْ كُلُوا آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ أَيُّهَا يَاكُمْ رَزَقْنَا

O ye who Believe! Eat what is tayyib - pure, delicious and of high quality - which We have provided for you. (2:172)

On this I had said that garments should also be "delicious", homes should also be "delicious". I had explained to you the four levels as well.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had said:

طلب كسب الحلال فريضة بعد الفريضة

Seeking a halaal livelihood is compulsory after the fundamental fara'idh of ibaadat.

I had also said that the effects of Haraam, the results of Haraam, are not good. The nuraaniyet that is produced by halaal is not produced by Haraam. Therefore, when keeping rozah (fasting), if a person has Haraam or doubtful wealth, he should rather borrow halaal tayyib money as a loan to buy his food. Also, the loan should be taken from a non-Muslim, so that at least in Ramadhan his food that is ingested at the time of sehri and iftar is halaal.

In discussing in front of you the topic of earning a worldly livelihood, I have explained that this is Din and not dunya. Every task of a Muslim is Din and not dunys.

I end off by making du'a that Allah Ta'ala grant you and me the taufiq to earn halaal and grant us the taufiq to abstain from Haraam.

Chapter No.:

18

Foreword

Fulfilling promises

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Maseehullah Khan Sahib (RA) was born in Sarai Barlah in the district of Aligarh in the year 1329 or1330 H. Hadhrat's (RA) lineage is linked to the noble Sharwani family of landed nobility, and being linked to Sayyid Hussain Ghauri (RA), the lineage is also Sayyid. Hadhrat (RA) attended the local government school up to standard six, but did not continue with his secular education, preferring to study Din, which he studied initially in his home town, and thereafter completing his studies in Deoband. Hadhrat (RA) became bay't to Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA), from whom Hadhrat (RA) received his Khilaafat the same year that Hadhrat (RA) qualified from Deoband. Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA) stationed Hadhrat (RA) in Jalalabad, where Hadhrat (RA) established the madrassah, Miftahul-Uloom, and a khanqah where saalikin stayed for their self-rectification. He passed away in Jalalabad on the 17th Jamaadul-Ulaa 1413 H. (14th November 1992).

Published by Dr. Ismail Mangera

e-mail: imangera@cybertrade.co.za

FOREWORD

Al-hamdulillah , once again, solely through the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of my Sheikh (RA) also, not forgetting the valued du'as of our readers - this sixteenth discourse is ready.

Looking at the correspondence of those who used to write to Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Maseehullah Khan Sahib (RA), one notices that time and again the du'a and the advice given is to develop istiqaamat. The dictionary meanings of istiqaamat are: "firmness; stability; constancy; steadfastness; rectitude; uprightness." The word also implies carrying out tasks correctly and perfectly. The message conveyed is that one should carry out tasks perfectly, constantly and with steadfastness, even though the quantity is small.

In this majlis a variety of topics are discussed by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Maseehullah Khan Sahib (RA). The topics discussed are important for all of us. Several topics are emphasised over and over again. The purpose is to develop istiqaamat in the saalik: the saalik may have heard a topic discussed previously, but the importance may have escaped his notice. By discussing the topic again, its importance is brought out. It is an occasion for the saalik to look at himself whether he has brought that particular aspect into his/ her life and whether there is perfection and constancy in carrying that task. In this way, the saalik progresses

step by step, stage by stage, but, under the guidance of his sheikh he reaches his/ her destination.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us all the tawfeeq to follow the teachings of our Sheikh (RA). May Allah Ta'ala save us from being swayed this way and that way by all the different winds that are blowing around us. Aameen

[This majlis was conducted by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Maseehullah Khan Sahib (RA) in South Africa, most probably in the year 1982 or 1984]

بســـم الله الرحمـــان الـــرحيم

نحمـــد و نصـــلي علـــى رســـوله الكـــريم

ENTER INTO ISLAM FULLY

الـــرجيم بســـم الله الرحمـــان الـــرحيم أعــوذ بــالله مــن الشــيطان

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَافَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ (بقرة 208)

Fulfilling promises

Before this, by the tawfeeq of Allah Ta'ala, and the focused attention, du'as and the sincerity of intentions of all you honoured people here - before going on to narrate something in connection with this aayate-kareemah - it is appropriate to say that, it was brought to my attention at about 2 o'clock or half-past two, that a majlis or a bayaan (lecture)shall take place. At the time of salaah I had no knowledge of having to deliver a bayaan. That is why I was unperturbed. Zuhr salaah was performed in another masjid. When returning from there, as I was about to go

upstairs to my room, it was indicated to me to proceed to a room downstairs. Thinking that some arrangements had been made for tea, I came this way. I do not eat any lunch. Whatever my habit is at home, that is my habit away from home, whether it concerns my ma'mulat or my eating habits. There, in the room, a dastarkhan was laid, some cold refreshments were served - what you call "ice-cream", very delicious - I partook a very little of it and drank a very small amount of tea, not even a quarter cup.

We were in haste to come here, seeing that word had been dropped into my ear about this majlis, because it is not decent that when a written or verbal promise has been made to someone, when one has committed oneself, to act contrary to it. My temperament feels ashamed. It is a human, Shar'i and natural demand that a person should carefully weigh a promise before committing oneself, and once one has committed oneself, one should fulfil the promise. Punctuality as far as time is concerned, my honoured friends, is an Islamic teaching. We have absolutely no need to take from others any aspects, whether they relate to matters intellectual, temperamental, Shar'i or common law. What is there lacking in our home, Islam? Each and every facet and every situation has been set forth in detail. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has not neglected to comment on every topic for his ummat. Whatever was of benefit, or could be of benefit, from whatever aspect - not only on aspects of 'ibaadat, but also on matters concerning ma'aasharat (social etiquettes and lifestyle) - has been narrated. Our thinking, which has become the general attitude amongst our people, is that Islam is only concerned with salaah and saum (salat and fasting), these few necessary acts of 'ibaadat. This is not the

case. From the time of one's birth till the time that one enters the grave, and whatever is going to transpire in the grave till the time of Qayaamat, and then till entry into Jannat or Jahannam and the conditions to be found there - that is, from birth till one's final abode in the hereafter - have all been narrated. We have absolutely no need to ask any other individual, any other nation, any other country, concerning anything connected to any aspect of our lives.

Istinjaa - its method

Take a simple act like istinjaa - cleansing oneself after answering the call of nature: we have been taught even its method. From here we can assess that other (more important) aspects will definitely have been narrated. Besides the thawaab and reward we will be earning in the hereafter - this being our basic intention, that Allah Ta'ala should be pleased with us, this being our aim and objective in every each of our actions - nevertheless, other benefits also accrue. With regard to istinjaa, we have been shown and taught even its method: Do not stand and urinate; squat and urinate; when squatting select a spot that is elevated (if one had to urinate in an open place); if the spot is low, urinate in such a manner that urine-drops does not splash back on you but gets quickly absorbed into the ground. If drops of urine are allowed to splash onto one's trouser-legs, or feet or shoes, then, after death, one will be liable for punishment in the grave as well.

Punishment in the grave

You may be aware or may have heard that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), accompanied by some of his Sahaabah (RA), was passing by a

qabristan (cemetery), when he suddenly stood still and commanded, "Bring two green twigs." These were brought. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) planted the one on one of the graves and planted the other on another grave, letting them stand erect. The Sahaabah (RA) enquired, "O Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), why have you done this? We have never seen you do this before." Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "The person buried here, lying in this grave, is being punished. The reason is that he did not take care to protect himself from drops of urine splashing onto him. And this other grave that is here is of that person who was a tale-bearer. He is being punished because of his tale-bearing..."

Tale-bearing - definition, and a qissah

I am sure that you know what is tale-bearing: A person goes to another and tells him, "That other person said such-and-such about you. This is harmful to your interests." He then goes to the other person and tells him, "I am sure that you know that your so-called friend is scheming up plans to harm you and saying such-and-such about you." This is called tale-bearing. In this matter today's world has advanced a great deal! To create disunity and discord has become our profession. To bring about unity or strengthen any existing bond is something that we have distanced ourselves from. Tale-bearing is something that we have to take great care to save ourselves from.

In connection with tale-bearing, a qissah comes to mind:

There was this one person who was quite wealthy. He had a number of servants and slaves, as he had the necessary wealth, as is quite correct. The Shari'at states that of what use is that wealth, of what benefit is that opulence? If Allah Ta'ala has blessed a person with wealth, and employing servants is not harmful, neither at that moment nor in the future, and there is no danger of suffering financial difficulties, neither at that moment nor in the future, and this person does not keep servants, then he is a stingy person and a miser of the highest degree! Such a person should have a servant and take work from a servant.

To continue: This well-to-do person was in need of a slave and he went out searching for one. It was an age where slaves were kept. Slaves were being sold in the marketplace. In search of a slave, he wandered through the marketplace, inspecting the various slaves presented there. He then noticed an individual selling a particular slave: he noted that the slave was youthful and extremely handsome. His body was muscular, his limbs strong and firm. He was immediately drawn to him and his heart was set on buying him. He expressed this desire to the owner of the slave that he wished to buy this particular slave. The owner noticed, from the fine clothes, demeanour and speech of this person that he was from the nobility. He took him aside and quietly warned him, "For goodness sake, do not buy this slave! Think for yourself: if he had no serious fault - one that is harmful and damaging - in him, somebody who is young and strong and handsome like him, why would I ever sell him? He has such a major defect that you will surely suffer from its effects. He is a tale-bearer, and that is why I am selling him." But the buyer was not prepared to listen to the owner.

It behoves a person that, if he does not prepared to use his own common sense and reason, he should take the advice of another and have confidence in him, provided that there is no evidence of this person's enmity.

With great reluctance the owner sold him this slave. The new owner took him home. The slave was very intelligent. He worked hard and long at gaining the confidence of his new owner and his wife. When he was certain that he had achieved this and that they trusted him fully and would not reject anything he said, his old habit of tale-bearing, manifested itself. He told his owner, "I have been here now with you for a long time. You have observed that I have proved myself to be truthful. I can tell you something that is absolutely truthful: it is this that your wife has forged a liaison with a stranger, of which I am aware."

The husband thought to himself, "Such a long time has passed, and he has proved himself to be trustworthy, and this is what he is saying, but... should I take him seriously?" When the slave kept on repeating the same calumny, it had an effect on him, it being part of the nature of man that he is affected by the repetition of any statement. The slave then gave the owner a grave warning, "If you are not prepared to listen to me, just watch out for that day when your throat will be slit!" The slave then went to his owner's wife and said, "Do you know that your husband is having an affair with another woman? I have tried very hard to save him from this woman, but he is completely infatuated with her. Despite my efforts, he is just not prepared to listen to reason."

This is not a minor matter. How can any woman tolerate such a situation? When a man will not tolerate this shirk (Shirk - usually translated as polytheism; having partners with Allah Ta'ala. In this instance Hahdratji (R.A) is equating the wife sharing her affection with another male as shirk, whereas her affection should be solely for him), that his wife's eyes should wander onto another - this being the demands of an honourable disposition - similarly, a wife will not tolerate that her husband has an affair with another woman. From this you can gauge that if, humans being humans, a husband and wife, being of honourable dispositions, will not tolerate this shirk of sharing their partners with others, how can or will Allah Ta'ala be happy or tolerate the shirk of anybody making partners with him? This is a matter to ponder over.

To continue: The same tale the slave kept on repeating to the wife, just as he had kept on repeating the other tale to the husband. Then, one day the wife asked him, "Well then, what is the form of deliverance from this situation? What can one do to disenchant his heart him from this other woman that his affair terminates?" The slave replied, "I know of a special talisman - a charm or amulet. I shall make an effort, by myself or with the help of others whom I am acquainted with. But the situation is serious..." Just see his guile! He had gone to the husband and said, "There will come a day when your throat will be slit, seeing that you are not prepared to listen!" He then went to the wife and said, "I know of the talisman to be used, but it is not going to be easy..." In desperation, she pleaded, "As far as is possible, I shall whatever I can. What is it that I have to do?" The slave said, "When your husband is sleeping, and he is in deep sleep, you take a knife and go to

him and cut some strupees of hair from the under section of his beard, and bring them to me." Can you see his shrewdness? He continued. "When you have brought the strupees of hair, I shall recite the special words of the charm on them and tie some knots, and this will result in discord and separation between him and this other woman." He then went to the husband and said, "Be alert! I fear that the time has come that your throat is going to be slit!" That night he lay in his bed, but where would sleep come? When the thought has been instilled in the mind that one's throat will be slit, can anybody still sleep peacefully? But he pretended to be fast asleep. His wife approached. Through half-open eyes he saw that she had a knife in her hand. She tip-toed nearer and bent to cut the hair from the underside of his beard. He, on the other hand, having been told that his throat was to be slit that night, was now convinced that she was wielding a knife to slit his throat, and grabbed her hand. Snatching that very knife out of her hand, he slit her throat. It is obvious that an incident like this cannot be concealed. The police were informed and he was arrested for her murder. He was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged. The whole story thus came out. Just before he was hanged, somebody asked him, "Why did you do it?" He replied, "This was the result of my own foolishness and immaturity. I did not accept the advice of one who had my welfare at heart. When I wished to buy this slave, the previous owner warned me that he was a tale-bearer and that one day I would surely suffer some harm from him. But I did not listen. I fell for his tale-bearing. My wife is also gone, my home is destroyed and my life is also ending."

My beloved friends! Whatever narration concerning oneself, whosoever narrates it, it is not permissible to accept it as truth. To be cautious thereafter, is another matter. There should be a full investigation first. There is a specific mas'alah regarding this: without proper investigation - without definite evidence - to act according to hearsay is not permissible.

To continue: Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that the person in the one grave was one who did not safeguard himself from drops of urine splashing on him and the person in the other grave was one who was a tale-bearer. "I have planted these green twigs on both their graves. The twigs will make tasbeeh of Allah as long as they remain. And the effect of the tasbeeh will be that the punishment of the dweller will be lightened. The same with the other grave: as long as the twig makes tasbeeh, the punishment of the dweller in that grave will also be lightened." And it is not impossible that one day the punishment can end as well. Just assess for yourself the concern Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had.

Flowers on graves

From this I do not wish that it should be implied that from this that is proved that if all flowers and plants on a grave will continuously be making the tasbeeh of Allah Ta'ala, whereas there is no proof for this. Also, the implication of having plants growing on the graves of people, and especially of the Awliya-Allah, is that we consider them to be sinners and that they are undergoing punishment. This is the mas'alah of the Shari'at, and when the Shari'at has stated something then it means

that this is the order of Allah Ta'ala and Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). That order (amr) that is not attained by qiyaas, but is contrary to reason, which is referred to as amr-istihsaani, shall be kept as it is and as it was according to the circumstances and the situation upon which it was stated. It will be not be changed. This is the mas'alah.

Take this example: Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was leading the salaah. One Sahaabi (RA) after making wudhu, tripped and fell as he was returning. The other Sahaabah (RA) burst out laughing while they were in salaah. After completion of the salaah, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Those of you who laughed out loud while in salaah, your wudhu is broken and your salaah is invalidated. Repeat your wudhu and your salaah." This is contrary to "reason" and is an amr-istihsaani. No impurity was excreted. There was merely the act of laughing. How can one's wudhu break? And once the order was given that the wudhu was broken, it is obvious that the salaah cannot be valid in the absence of wudhu. This particular order where the wudhu is broken, is called amr-istihsaani. That is why it is said that that salaah in which there is ruku' and sajdah, if one were to laugh out loudly, the wudhu would break, whereas that salaah which has neither ruku' nor sajdah, this wudhu will not break. It is a different matter that the salaah will become invalid. This is amr-istihsaani. It cannot change and cannot be applied to other situations: If a person is merely sitting, not making salaah, and he laughs out loudly, his wudhu does not break.

We were discussing istinjaa and Rasulullah's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) statements. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) also showed the method of

performing istinjaa, and said that thereafter one should then use a mud-clot (dhela) to wipe oneself dry. We consider this to be a minor matter and have mostly discarded this practice.

You are aware the non-Muslim groups are obsessed with research. Numerous Ph.D's are undertaken on various research projects. One such research project was undertaken by an English doctor: he wondered why the Nabi of the Muslims, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), gave the order to wipe with a mud-clot after making istinjaa. We, as Muslims, are in no need of such research. All we need to know is that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) gave such an instruction at such a time. We have merely to obey. Why? We are in no need of any such philosophy and reasons. Our relationship is not such that we will obey only if we were to understand the reason behind the instruction. Wanting to know the reason behind an instruction and then only to obey is a sign of stupidity; it is a condition of having no faith and confidence (be-i'timaadi) - may Allah Ta'ala save us from this! This attitude is one that can lead us to kufr. To undertake academic research is something else, but research is not needed for carrying out actions: our Imaan dictates this is the order of Allah Ta'ala and that of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Medical benefit of using mud-clods

To continue: We had heard related to us by Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA). Hadhratwala mentioned that he came across the article where this doctor wrote that for years he was doing research on why this instruction was

given that one should wipe oneself with a mud-clot after having made istinjaa. Then, one day, the following conclusions struck him: Urine is acidic. The residual drops of urine will, therefore, show an acidic effect on the urethra. The antidote to an acid is an alkali. Acid, because of its harshness, if drops of urine remain behind, this urine can have an adverse effect on the urethra. And the Nabi, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), where he had prescribed for his Ummat deeds that are of benefit and also to save the Ummat from harm in the hereafter, he had also prescribed deeds to save the Ummat from worldly harms. This, then, is a bodily harm, where there is a danger of developing some illness. The urine has acidity in it and has the potential to cause harm, and the antidote is an alkaline, so that the mud-clot draws out the drops of urine and its alkalinity neutralises the acidity, preventing the development of any illnesses. The order that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) gave to use the mud-clot, thus, provides this worldly benefit.

One can thus gauge from this that whatever is harmful, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has instructed us to abstain from it, and whatever is beneficial, we have been instructed to carry out. Every thing has been narrated.

To continue with our topic: Among the instructions given to us is that, when we have promised somebody and given one's word to somebody, concerning time, be punctual in keeping to the time, unless some special, valid obstacle presents itself. This punctuality as far as time is concerned, is a mas'alah of our teachings, of our Shariat, of our Islam. It is not necessary for us to lessons from observing the punctuality of others, that other nationalities are very punctual. We have seen, during the time of British rule, that when a person had made an appointment with

some ra'is (one of the nobility) for a specific time, and he would arrive just two minutes early for an appointment, this person would look at his watch and would not enter the premises to say that he had come. He would look at his watch and would wait two minutes outside. At exactly the appointed time would he would announce his arrival. So exact was the punctuality.

Our akaabir, the ahlullah, as well, were very meticulous about being punctual.

So, this is a promise - it is a commitment - and we have been ordered to fulfil our promises:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَوْفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ

O ye who believe! If you have made a promise to anybody, fulfil that promise. (5:1)

وَأَوْفُوا بِالْعَهْدِ إِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْئُولً

And remember that you will be taken to account for the promises you make.(17:34)

Promises of the heart

We have this concept that promises are those that we make verbally, and these are called promises and these are the promises we have to fulfil. No, not at all! Even if we have made any promises in our hearts to anybody, to bring benefit or ease and comfort to anybody, these also have to be fulfilled. If we had made the promise in our hearts, but have not voiced it, then this promise has also to be fulfilled. This

promise made in the heart is making a promise to Allah Ta'ala. It is necessary to fulfil this promise. If one does not fulfil this promise, there is a real danger of suffering some worldly harm!

It is accepted that as far as the ahlullah are concerned, when some resolve sets into their hearts, provided that it is not contrary to the Shari'at and there is some "alarm bell" (khatak) that rings in their heart, instilled from Allah Ta'ala, it becomes a responsibility that they fulfil that resolve. If they do not fulfil that resolve - if they take no notice of that khatak - they do suffer some worldly harm, even though they may not suffer in the hereafter, for punishment in the hereafter is for sins only and not for matters that are not sins.

Do not ignore the ‘khatak' in the heart: a qissah

Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA), mentioned an incident:

A particular pir from elsewhere came to visit a particular locality. It is a natural desire to visit a person according to the status that he enjoys. When the local buzurg, who was a resident in that locality, heard of the arrival of this other person, he felt the desire to meet the visitor. When he stood up to proceed to meet him, the thought came into his heart, "Do not go." So he sat down again. Then he thought, "This is only a wehm - an unsubstantiated doubt - that I am having. I should go." He stood up to go. Again the thought came to him, "Do not go." He sat down again. After a little while he thought to himself for the third time, "No, really, I should go and visit him. This is only my wehm. I have heard that he is a pious person." He stood up to go. Again the thought came to him, "Do not go!", and he

sat down. At the fourth instance he ignored the warning and proceeded towards the door. He had hardly taken two steps when his foot slipped and he twisted his ankle and fell down!

Importance of sincerity of intention

Another qissah:

There is a qissah of an individual who was travelling in the countryside at a time when there was a severe drought and famine. He saw a large mound of sand in the distance and thought, "O Allah! If this mound of sand could turn into grain, I would distribute it among all the poor." This was a thought in his heart and became a promise of his. Allah Ta'ala instructed the Nabi of the time to inform this person that the sand will remain as it is, but the sincerity of his intention (ikhlaas) was noted by Allah Ta'ala, and he would receive the reward in his Book of Good Deeds of having distributed that much grain to the poor!

Not honouring a promise

Another qissah:

Another person made this resolve, "O Allah! Were I to receive a bag of money I would give the money away in charity!" Allah Ta'ala sent him a bag of money. The thought now came to him, "If I were to give this away in charity, what would I do if I am in need?" His intention changed and became perverted. He did not distribute the money. You must have heard that there may be delay (dher) with Allah Ta'ala, but not darkness (indher). Shortly thereafter, this person developed

toothache. He went for treatment but to no avail. The pain increased. His teeth started falling out one by one. The pain and agony increased. He finally went out to the wilderness and lay down in complete despair. A Voice told him, "You had made a promise of distributing some money. I sent you a bag of money, but you turned back on your promise. Unless and until you do not give the money away, all your teeth will fall out."

Just ponder: On the one hand there was this person without possessing any grain and the sand remaining as it was, but Allah Ta'ala knew the sincerity of his intention, he was rewarded according to his intention. On the other hand, this person was given what he asked for, but his intention became corrupt and suffered its consequences, because he had not kept to the promise he had made.

From Allah Ta'ala there is delay but not injustice: Adl and Fadhl

As I was saying, by Allah Ta'ala there is dher (delay) - this is due to some wisdom, some tact on His part - but there is no indher (darkness / injustice). Otherwise, taking those kings who do not rule with justice, if Allah Ta'ala were to be unjust as well, what difference would there be between the worldly kings and the King of kings?

There are two attributes of Allah Ta'ala to consider: One is Adl (Justice) and Fadhl (Grace). Remember very well, never ask Allah Ta'ala for Adl, but always ask for Fadhl. Should Allah Ta'ala decide to deal with us with Adl, dear friends, having placed one foot on the ground one will not remain alive long enough to place one's second foot on the ground! We should always but always ask from Allah Ta'ala

His Fadhl, not for Adl. Just ponder: can any sinner ever address Allah Ta'ala and say, "O Allah! Deal with me with Adl."? No, he cannot. However, what is the demand of Adl? It is that, when one has acted contrary to His orders, one should not ask to be punished. Who wants to be punished? No. One should never request Adl. Never mind sinning, even after having made ‘ibaadat one should not say, "O Allah! I have made this ‘ibaadat - deal with me with Adl." The type of ‘ibaadat we perform our Rabb knows very well. If we were to be dealt with Adl, we would not be entitled to any reward. Any reward is purely His Fadhl. We should make du'a for Fadhl. He has already stated from before that for every good deed (néki), He will reward us tenfold. Therefore, the reward for performing the five daily salaahes is as having performed fifty salaahes. We are only too well aware of the quality of our salaahes. Nevertheless, we place our hope in His Fadhl, as has been mentioned.

These are topics that come to mind. As the topics come to mind, I mention them. I do not think out the topics beforehand. What is achieved by such planning? One plans one thing and something entirely different happens. One buzurg was asked, "How did you come to recognise Allah Ta'ala?" He replied, "I recognised Him by the fact that I resolve something and it does not materialise - I resolve something and it does not materialise - I resolve something and it does not materialise - I resolve something and it does not materialise.... From this I came to realise that there is another Being whose resolve overpowers mine."

Similarly, another was asked, "How would you define Aql (Intelligence)? " He replied, "Aql is that which recognises Allah Ta'ala." He was then asked, "Who is

Allah Ta'ala?" He replied, "Allah Ta'ala is He who cannot be encompassed by Aql."

So, one should always ask for Fadhl. How can one ask for Adl? Even after ‘ibaadat, ask for Fadhl. It is only through His Fadhl that He accepts our ‘ibaadat. That is why our Dada pir, Haji Imdadullah Sahib (RA), used to say deprecatingly, with regard to the salaah that they had performed, "O Hadhrat, what is my salaah? My salaah is nothing." This is showing contempt to salaah. This should NOT to be said. One should rather say, "Alhamdulillah! I have performed salaah with the tawfeeq of Allah Ta'ala, and I have hope that, through His Fadhl, it will be accepted."

These are words, though spoken by my tongue, but are the statements of my Sheikh (RA). What I have heard from him I am relaying to you.

Rahaaish aasaaish zibaaish and numaaish

You will have noted that people have glass cabinets - even people over here possess them. There is no harm in having them, if Allah Ta'ala has blessed one with wealth. I do not wish to discuss this matter now, as I have already discussed it somewhere else. There is no objection to having these cabinets, bearing in mind a few guidelines: Briefly, there are four categories: Rahaaish, aasaaish, zebaaish and numaaish. I hope our mothers and sisters are also listening attentively! I have been informed that there are womenfolk who are also listening.

Firstly, there is Rahaaish: this means, to have a place to stay, where one can see to one's needs, where there is shade from the sun, protection from the rain and cold.

Such a place is called a house - a place to stay and where one's basics needs are seen to. To attain this much is fardh and waajib (compulsory). Then we have aasaaish: possessing those items whereby one can live in comfort. The house may be built but, as yet, there are no features providing comfort. If Allah Ta'ala has blessed one with wealth, one should add on features providing comfort: some paintwork; windows providing proper ventilation; rooms big enough to be comfortable; proper lighting; etc. - features providing comfort. This category is mustahab, whereas the first category was waajib. The third category is that of zebaaish or zeenat: beauty/ elegance/ adornment. This category is mubah - that is, it is jaa'iz (permissible). It is neither waajib nor mustahab. If Allah Ta'ala has blessed one with wealth, and one undertakes to make the inside on one's home beautiful and elegant, then it is permissible. A person may have elegant carpets on the floor, beautiful frames on the walls, valuable objects in glass cabinets, etc. This will fall in the category of zebaaish and zeenat.

Women and beautification

For womenfolk to beautify themselves for their husbands, whether it is facial beauty, or beauty of their hair or their clothes, so that their husbands are happy with them, that their hearts are more attracted to them and are more drawn to them, is not merely mubah, it is higher category than even mustahab. Zeenat and zebaaish of this type is not only mustahab but it is waajib for her, that her husband's heart remains attached to her and that his eyes do not drift to others and his feelings do not incline towards others. This is waajib for the wife: she should be neat and tidy, her hair properly combed, she should apply surmah, and wear

attractive clothes. However, we see our womenfolk adorning themselves and making themselves attractive when they go out to weddings, but the moment they come home they remove these clothes. These sisters who then claim that they are staying with zebaaish and zeenat - forgive me, but what they have said, and are saying, is not zebaaish, but falls into a fourth category, and that is of numaaish, which is haraam. This fourth category of numaaish, to display to others, is haraam. In addition, if the clothes worn are contrary to the Islamic teachings, and are an imitation of non-Muslims, what is termed as tashabbah of non-Muslims, following their fashions, then this act in itself will also be haraam. What happens is that today she is wearing a particular outfit which she saw displayed in the shops on their mannequins. After a few days this outfit is taken off and another outfit is worn, another fashionable outfit from America or elsewhere which she saw displayed on another mannequin in the shops. The first outfit may have cost five hundred rupees and the second outfit also costs several hundred rupees. This involves another evil - destroying one's wealth (idhaa'ate-maal). One may dress well but simple, but one should not imitate other nations. Imitation of other nations - tashabbah - is haraam. Whether it is a male or a female who imitates other nations, in both cases it is haraam. There is a very severe emphasis on its avoidance.

Beards of men and tresses of women

A Hadith Shareef comes to mind:

Among the varied jamaa'at (groups) of malaa'ikah who recite the tasbeeh, there is a tasbeeh of one group of malaa'ikah which is truly amazing. The tasbeeh that this jamaa'at of malaa'ikah recite is:

نساء بالذوائب سبحان من زين الرجال باللحى و زين ال

We recite the tasbeeh of that pure Allah Who adorned males by way of their beards and of that pure Allah Who adorned women by way of their tresses.

What we are discussing is zeenat: The tasbeeh is of that zeenat. It is not to be assumed that the beard is only for adornment (zeenat). The zeenat refers to the tasbeeh. Having a beard infers that there is zeenat in it, however, it is fardh to keep beard. It is of the sha'aair (symbols) of Islam. When it is said that it is merely a sunnat, is plain deception. Performing a circumcision is also referred to as sunnat. It can also be said that the Azaan is sunnat. When the thought is expressed that it is merely a sunnat, then these are not befitting words to be uttered by any Muslim. Can any person claiming to be an aashiq of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) say, "It is merely a sunnat."? What an unseemly sentence! These are of the sha'aair of Islam that men should keep beards and that women should have tresses - the longer the tresses, with beautification and grooming, to that extent it lends to the beauty and adornment of women. There was that age, when women used to have an altercation with one another, one would threaten the other, "Let my husband come home and see if I do not cause your tresses to be cut off!" This was said in extreme anger. When there was a fight between the menfolk, were one of the men to catch hold of the other's beard, this was the end! Everything else could

be tolerated, but for somebody else to lay a hand on one's beard was intolerable. It was a grievous insult, damaging enough for the person to give an ultimatum, "Today it is either me or you!"

The beard is of the sha'aair of Islam - it is fardh to keep one. Not to keep a beard is a matter of sin. However, not to keep a beard and then to make insulting comments about the beard and say, "What , have you put up a ‘sign-board'?" A statement also heard is that a beard is kept by goats. The person making this statement does not realise that this comment reaches back to include the Ambiyaa (AS)! I tell my brothers, when such comments are directed at them, that they should not feel upset, because they are being praised by such comments. These critics have acknowledged your elevated status. Do you not know that not every shop has a ‘sign-board', but only big and important firms will have ‘sign-boards'! In other words, what they are saying is that, because of your kaamil Imaan and because of you being a good Muslim, that beard of yours is evidence of you being a kaamil, deen-daar Muslim. That is what the ‘sign-board' signifies. They may mean something else by their comments, but they are, in actual fact, praising you.

Imitating others: a qissah concerning transposition of bodies

I am reminded of a qissah:

This is a historical incident that Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA) related to us. It was the time of Haj. Normally, before or after Haj, people go to the qabristaan (cemetery) - Jannatul Ma'alaa in Makkah and Jannatul Baqi in Madina - to recite faatihah. As a group passed a certain grave, their gazes fell on the body inside and

they saw, to their utter amazement, what appeared to be the body of a young Christian girl! As we are all aware, no non-Muslim is allowed entrance into the Haramain, sacred cities of Makkah Mu'azzamah and Madina Munawwarah. How could a Christian girl be present here? What an amazing thing to happen! One of the onlookers said, "But a certain man - a proper practising Muslim performing his salaah at the proper times, with a proper beard and so forth - was buried in this grave! Where is his body? In his lifetime, was there any action of his that is responsible for this strange occurrence? Let us enquire at his home." Some people went to the house where this man, whose body was supposed to be in the grave, used to live to enquire from his wife. They asked her as to the kind of person her late husband was and what was his character like. She replied, "He was a very good man. He was regular and punctual in his salaah, he kept a proper beard - he had all good qualities in him. Why are you asking?" They urged her, "Think carefully. Was there anything he may have done that was... er... not entirely Islamic?" The widow paused to think. After some thought, she spoke, "One thing comes to mind. It is this: When my husband was in need of ghusl after janaabat [a bath after marital intercourse, as required by the Shari'at], yes, he definitely did perform ghusl, however he used to comment, ‘There is this good thing about the Christian religion that it is not necessary to perform the ghusl of janaabat.'"

What this implies is that the teachings of another religion has been given pre-eminence and virtue in direct opposition to the Islamic fardhiyat (compulsory ‘ibaadat) of the ghusl of janaabat. This amounts to a criticism and objection of the command of Allah Ta'ala, that it would have better if this command was not there.

As a habit he did perform the ghusl, but, in his heart, he found the command distasteful and he wished that it would have been better if this command was not there.

Ponder! He was performing the ghusl, but from his lips were issuing words belittling and condemning the Shari'at, and he considered that he was a mu'min, but Imaan had departed from him. Some words of kufr are uttered by people, and out of welfare and compassion for our brothers, it is necessary to point this out to them. They are unaware which words, if uttered, will lead to kufr. It is, therefore, necessary that these topics come to the ears of our brothers and sisters. Topics bringing tears to the eyes have been, and continue to be, discussed. Topics producing mirth and humour have also been, and continue to be, discussed. Historical topics are also discussed. But these are not as beneficial as discussing the topics of illnesses and the cures of these illnesses. Unfortunately, our inclinations and attentions are not on the latter.

To continue: One of those who were present at the grave had an amazing tale to tell. He said, "I recognise this girl in this grave, who appears to be a Christian. I am her ustaadh (teacher). I used to teach her in Paris. She accepted Islam in front of me - she read the shahaadah at my hands. She passed away in Paris and was buried there. It was thereafter, with the season of Haj coming, that I came for Haj. This is that very girl!" Just see: This girl, living in Paris as a Christian her whole life, then accepted Islam, passed away there and was buried there, came to lie in a grave in Makkah Mu'azzamah; while this man, a resident of Makkah Mu'azzamah, regular with his salaah and saum (fasting), a good Muslim in appearance, buried in the

sacred precincts of Makkah Mu'azzamah, was not to be found where he was buried. A collection was made and funds were made available to send the ustaadh to Paris where he spoke to the parents of the girl and sought permission to have the body buried in Paris to be exhumed. When the coffin was opened, the body of that Muslim person who was buried in Makkah Mu'azzamah, was found to be lying in the coffin! Allah Ta'ala had caused the body of the girl to be transposed from there, as if to say that this Daarul-Kufr was not a worthy place for her to lie and that the Daarul-Islam of Makkah Mu'azzamah was a more appropriate place for her. As for the body that was in the sacred precincts of Daarul-Islam, it was as if Allah Ta'ala had said that this is not a place for kufr, and his body was transposed to a land of kufr.

One should ponder. One should be careful what words issue from our lips. When the month of Ramadhan approaches wherein we fast, there are many who do not fast. Well, they are responsible for their actions, but, when asked if they are fasting, for them to say, "Why should one fast? Fasting is for those who do not have food at home." They do not realise that these are words of kufr.

As I was saying - and, hopefully, you would have listened attentively - a few aspects have been mentioned concerning Rahaaish, aasaa'ish, zebaaish and numaaish. We have been forbidden to imitate non-Muslims in those aspects specific to them, whether the tashabbah relates to opinions and statements, or the tashabbah relates to actions and deeds, or whether the tashabbah relates to clothing and dressing, or even to the extent of tashabbah related to methodologies which are specific to non-Muslims. That is why the fuqahaa (jurists) written in connection

with utensils made of brass - I have not seen them being used here, but they are used back home to make bread, etc. - that it is not permissible for Muslims to use them; but should they wish to make use of brass utensils, then they should be plated with copper to differentiate them from the brass utensils used by non-Muslims. One can see that in connection with a utensil, which is an item apart from one's body, the Shari'at states that it needs to be differentiated from that of non-Muslims, then with regard to the clothes that are worn on one's body and are attached to the body, how much more the emphasis will there not be on avoiding tashabbah with non-Muslims. Going a step further, take one's face, which forms part of one's body, how much greater caution should one not exercise in avoiding tashabbah with the non-Muslims.

Pardah

The absence of pardah is a feature of non-Muslim lifestyles. The Islamic teaching is that of adopting pardah - not of neglecting pardah (be-pardagi). By seeing others, by staying among them and by associating with them, the effects have manifested themselves and we have stopped observing pardah. We have adopted the ways of non-Muslims, this being tashabbah of them. Worse still, we do not consider this to be a defect within us. It is a general rule that when a wrong action is commonly practised and one's temperament repeats that action frequently, one ceases to recognise it being wrong.

Bribery is wrong and was considered to be such by everybody, but by employees indulging in bribery as a common practice, it being evil has gone out of the minds

of people and, instead, they are proud of it and will enquire from one another, "How much do you earn?" The reply will be, "I earn ‘X' amount a month."

Friends! When an evil becomes common and widespread, no matter how recriminative it may be, the evil of it goes out of people's minds. It is then considered to be goodness. Neglecting pardah (be-pardagi) was the supreme degree of insult and humiliation. Be-pardagi is a feature of the non-Muslims. By associating with them, staying among them, imitating them, the evil of be-pardagi has disappeared from our minds and we see the results of this on front of us. To put a halt to this evil has now become very difficult.

The fact is that there is the statement of Allah Ta'ala in the Qur'in Shareef:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لأَ ِ زْ وَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلاَ بِيبِهِنَّ

O Nabi (i.e. Rasulullah, Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), say to your wives, to your daughters, to the womenfolk of the Believers, if they perchance were to leave their homes, they should cover themselves with their sheets from their heads till the bottom. (33:59)

Jalaab - this is a sheet that is thrown over the head and allowed to hang right down to the feet. This includes covering the head, face, chest, legs and feet.

An incident from days gone by

Let me mention an incident that occurred in the days gone by in Jalalabad, indicating the high degree of modesty and sense of shame in that era. In those days women used to travel in dolis. These were sedan chairs which had a canopy and

were covered on all four sides. There was a very small window-type opening on the sides. Even if they had to travel short distances, they made use of the doli. After the partition of the subcontinent (into India and Pakistan) the use of the doli has ceased. A wedding was taking place locally. A certain lady was travelling to the house where the bride was. While travelling, she placed her face at the window - which she should not have done - and peeped outside. Nearby, there was a Khan sahib who observed her action. He quickly went into his house, took out his rifle, loaded it, came out and shot the lady as she was still peeping from the little window. She died on the spot. The carriers, unaware of what had happened, stopped at the house where the woman was proceeding to, and placed the chair on the ground. But who could come out? The woman was dead. A girl from the house came to receive her, but nobody climbed out. The carriers called out for the woman to alight, but there was no response. Finally, they lifted up the curtains, only to see her lying dead, shot through the head. There was a big commotion. Who shot her? The carriers recalled hearing a shot being fired but could not say from where it originated. When an investigation commenced, the Khan sahib himself came forward and declared, "I shot her. If she had no intention of observing pardah, why did she sit in a doli? If she decided to sit in a doli, then why did she expose herself by peeping out? My ghairat (sense of honour) could not tolerate this situation. My ghairat impelled me to take the measure I did. Today exposes herself after choosing to sit in pardah in a doli and tomorrow she will be walking in the street without pardah!" This incident took place a very long time ago.

I have to emphasise that the above incident is not part of Din.

What we were discussing is that which is resolved in the heart, is a promise made to Allah Ta'ala. If one acts contrary to this, it is dishonouring a promise. There will be accountability by Allah Ta'ala. The discussion then went on to the topic of tashabbah.

Nisbat

One other matter comes to mind. O, if we could only take a lesson from it! These Ahkaame-Ilaahi (Orders of Allah Ta'ala) denote nisbat (having a relationship) with Allah Ta'ala. They denote nisbat with Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). The whole issue of nisbat is very wonderful and amazing. The nisbat of Madina Tayyibah is with Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). The nisbat of Baitullaah Shareef is with Allah Ta'ala. Just see how much honour and respect is there for the city of Madina Tayyibah. Just see how much honour and respect there is for the city of Makkah Mu'azzamah and of the Baitullaah Shareef . Therefore, how much more respect and honour should one not hold in one's heart to the orders related to these? How much displeasure will there not be on acting contrary to these orders! One person, having travelled through various countries, arrived at the time of Haj and went to Madina Tayyibah. He bought some dahi (yoghurt), and, having eaten some, remarked, "I have been to such-and-such a place. The dahi of that place is better than the dahi of this place." When he went to sleep at night, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said to him, "Seeing that you prefer the dahi of that other place you may as well leave here and go there!" When Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) cannot tolerate even an adverse comment made about an item of

food in his locality, how would he tolerate the actions of those who act contrary to his given orders?

There is a clear cut injunction:

خالفوا المشركين واعفوا اللّحى وقصّوا الشّوارب

Act contrary to (the actions) of the mushrikin - lengthen your beards and shorten your moustaches.

As to the length of the beard, it is not unlimited. We should not be in imitation of the Yahud or the Sikhs. This would again amount to tashabbah. The emphasis is on opposing the mushrikin.

To continue: The talk was on Allah Ta'ala's Fadhl and Adl. These are two important attributes. We should never ask for Adl but always ask for Fadhl. If we were to be dealt with Adl, our life would not be sustainable for even one moment: having taken one step, we would not live long enough to take another step forward. On the topic of Fadhl I remembered a qissah concerning Hadhrat Shibli (RA), that he had made wudhu and was proceeding to the masjid to perform salaah. This should be our effort also, that we should make wudhu at home and perform all our five salaahes in the House of Allah Ta'ala. It is conceded that in this age many homes may not have water, so there is no problem in making wudhu at the masjid. So, having made wudhu at home, Shibli (RA) was proceeding to the masjid when a Voice called out, "Shibli! You are proceeding with those feet to Our House?" Shibli (RA) turned back. The Voice called out again, "Shibli! Why have you turned your back on Our House? Why have you turned your face away?" Shibli (RA)

stood still. The Voice called out again, "Shibli! How can you make sabr from coming to Us that you have stood still?" Shibli (RA) cried out, "I am not allowed to proceed; I am not allowed to return; I am not allowed to stand." The Voice called out again, "Very well, Shibli, you may come with those feet of yours towards Us." What a manifestation of muhabbat (love and affection)!

It is His Fadhl that He has allowed us to perform salaah. Haji Imdadullah Sahib (RA) said many times that to state deprecatingly, "What is our salaah? It is nothing!" is an insulting statement. Do not say this. However, every each and salaah should be performed with diligence and care. Say to yourself, "I have presented myself in the Court of Allah Ta'ala. How should I stand? How should I make my intention and fold my hands? How should I pronounce the words with clarity? Where should I place my gaze?" Yet, we acknowledge that who can perform his ‘ibaadat at the level which the Honour and Dignity of Allah Ta'ala demands? But, simultaneously, depart from the masjid with this yaqeen (conviction) that the salaah has been accepted.

Imitation fruit - a lesson to be learnt

The example we can provide is as follows: We were saying that people have glass cabinets in their houses and then we went on the topic of zeenat, that it was permissible. Coming back: In these glass cabinets are to be found various ornaments, but there should be no figurines and pictures of animate objects. One may also find, among the ornaments, a bowl or basket of artificial fruit - there may be melons, bananas, grapes, pears and apples, etc. The first time that a simple

person like myself came across this situation, the thought came mind that the host has already kept some fruit ready for us; some bananas, grapes and some apples. Have these being kept to eat? But, after enquiring, I was informed, "These bananas, grapes and apples in front of you are not for eating." "Then what are they for?" "Hadhrat, this is some artwork. A certain person has fashioned these into the form of fruit from clay, painted them in the colours of real fruit and baked them in an oven to give this presentation." I was amazed. It was so cleverly done as to appear like real fruit - real bananas, grapes, apples and melons, yet made of clay. Also amazing is the fact that the original, real fruit would cost just a few cents or rupees, yet, these artificial fruits, because of the clever craftsmanship, cost ten times or more than the real fruit! Instead of you giving fifty cents you gave five rupees for each fruit. What type of person are you? You pay fifty cents for the original and five rupees for the artificial fruit that cannot be eaten but is a mere copy of the real fruit? You are so happy that you are prepared to reward the craftsman ten times the cost of the original, and you are proudly displaying the fruit in your glass cabinet, then why would that Allah Ta'ala not accept that saum and salaah, even though they may not be like the original saum and salaah made by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), but are attempts at replicating the same? Definitely He will! One should leave the masjid with this yaqeen that definitely He will. Our Dada pir, Haji Imdadullah Sahib (RA) also said, "Having completed one salaah and one now performs the next salaah, have the yaqeen that the previous salaah was accepted. If a king calls one of his citizens to his royal court and he is displeased with him will he invite him again? Definitely not! In a similar manner, if Allah Ta'ala has blessed one with tawfeeq of making ‘ibaadat in His Royal Court, and then blesses you with

the tawfeeq to perform make ‘ibaadat in His Royal Court once again, it implies that the first ibadat was accepted."

The mas'alah of tashabbah has again been proved in a wonderful and amazing manner from the above explanation. Friends, there is great acceptance (qabuliyat) in imitating the pious. Similarly, there is great repugnance in imitating the evil. Another word had come to my lips, but I did not use it.

We hear people commenting sarcastically, "Does Din rest on the way you dress?" Yes. Din does rest on the way you dress! Wear Islamic clothes and then see! When somebody wears a kurtah extending to below the knees, people lift their eyebrows. One person over here told me - I had been told this before and I have heard it again today - that when a person wearing white Islamic clothes and a topi, and has a beard, the indigenous people will greet them with respect and will say that this is a Musalman. And when a person is not dressed in this manner but has a coat and trousers, despite being a Muslim, the response is not the same, and when he is asked, "Who is this person and who is that person?" the reply given is that this person is an Indian, while the other person is a Muslim. Even the indigenous people differentiate on the basis of clothes and appearance. This is the Fadhl of Allah Ta'ala.

Hadhrat Musa (AS) and the magicians

What can one do? Issues keep on returning. Leave aside what happens in dreams, but have you not heard? Hadhrat Musa (AS) was sent by Allah Ta'ala to Fir'oun. He had become very arrogant. Hadhrat Musa (AS) was ordered to invite him to

Tauhid (the One-ness of Allah Ta'ala). However, dear friends, those who refuse to accept, will refuse to accept the Word of Allah Ta'ala; and those who refuse to accept the Word of Allah Ta'ala, and those who do not accept the Word of Allah Ta'ala, where will they accept of the Rasul also. Shaitan did not accept the Word of Allah Ta'ala; Abu Jahl did not accept the word of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Nimrod did not accept the word of Hadhrat Ibrahim (AS). And Fir'oun refused to accept the word of Hadhrat Musa (AS). Fir'oun had never suffered even a headache. He felt himself to be invincible and claimed godhead for himself. He was given respite for three hundred and fifty years, during which time he was not afflicted with even a headache. Fir'oun thought that he was god. How much time was he not given? As mentioned before, there is dher by Allah Ta'ala - a period of respite - but there is no indher (injustice). One should not abuse the respite given by Allah Ta'ala, as mentioned earlier in the qissah of the person who did not keep to his promise of giving charity after Allah Ta'ala gave the money. Fir'oun still refused to accept after the three hundred and fifty years were up. Instead, he summoned all the magicians in the land. It should be noted that in that age there were no magicians superior to the ones that Fir'oun had. When the magicians gathered, their leader told his disciples, "Go and find out the type of clothes Musa was wearing. Make for yourselves exactly the same type of clothes. If he is a magician then there is no fear that he will win, because there are no magicians greater than us. And if he is a Nabi, as he claims to be, and he exhibits any miracle of his, the people will not realise that it is Musa, as you will all be dressed the same, and the people will not be influenced by him." The magicians did as they were told and dressed just like Hadhrat Musa (AS) was dressed. At the time that

the challenge took place, Hadhrat Musa (AS) was asked by the magicians, "Will you commence or us?" He replied, "You begin." From here, it has been deduced that, as far as possible, avoid being a claimant, as one's case is stronger then. The magicians displayed their trickery. In response, Hadhrat Musa (AS) threw down his miraculous staff. As he knew what the potential in the staff was, he stood back. The staff miraculously turned into a huge snake, which then proceeded to swallow the smaller snakes which the magicians had produced. The smaller snakes were ingested and digested by the staff-turned-serpent. What a big stomach the serpent had! Seeing it was a miraculous serpent, this is to be expected. Here, let me relate to you a subtle point (latifah): After the staff-turned-serpent of Hadhrat Musa (AS) had swallowed the artificially created snakes of the magicians, the staff-turned-serpent turned around and proceeded in the direction of Fir'oun. Fir'oun's self-proclaimed godhead vanished in an instant. As the serpent came nearer, he backed off in terror and pleaded with Hadhrat Musa (AS), "Catch him! Grant me respite!" Hadhrat Musa (AS) had a fierce temperament and he refused to catch hold of the serpent. Wahi (revelation) came to Hadhrat Musa (AS) from Allah Ta'ala, "O Musa! We had granted Fir'oun respite for three hundred and fifty years, and he is asking you respite for just a little while, and you are not prepared to grant him this? Grant him respite." Hadhrat Musa (AS) granted him respite. He grabbed hold of the serpent and it turned into a staff again. However, it appears in the books of history that, previous to this incident, it was Fir'oun's habit to have a bowel action once every forty days, but subsequent to this episode when he saw the serpent coming for him, he had forty bowel actions in one day! This was his "godhead"!

Friends, there is respite from Allah Ta'ala. There is imhaal (to be given respite) but not ihmaal (to be let off).

The magicians brought Imaan. This was the point I wished to make. The magicians accepted the invitation to tauhid. Hadhrat Musa (AS) was puzzled by one aspect. He asked Allah Ta'ala, "O Allah! You sent me to Fir'oun for his guidance. He did not accept the invitation to tauhid, but the magicians brought Imaan. Why so? This is something I do not understand." Friends, these are matters of the Unseen. These are issues concerning the secrets of Allah Ta'ala! No Nabi can fathom the secrets of Allah Ta'ala and no angel can fathom the secrets of Allah Ta'ala.

The mysteries and secrets of Allah Ta'ala

Another qissah has come to mind: Hadhrat Musa (AS) once requested, "O Allah! I wish to attain knowledge of Your secrets." Allah Ta'ala replied, "O Musa, do not make ask about My mysteries. You can never fathom them." However, Hadhrat Musa (AS) persisted with his request.

Take note at this point that, in our worldly affairs, when somebody important is pleaded to, and this person begs and persists in a request, the person to whom the requested is directed will give in to please the person. With Allah Ta'ala it is the same. The rule is that the Awliya-Allah are trained in the manner of the Ambiya (RA). This is the rule.

ألولاية مستفاد من النّبوة

Wilaayat that is attained - the Wilaayat that is of benefit - has been attained in the footsteps of the Ambiyaa (RA)

Some follow in the footsteps of Hadhrat Musa (AS). Others follow in the footsteps of Hadhrat Ibrahim (AS), and so forth.

When Hadhrat Musa (AS) persisted with his request, Allah Ta'ala acceded, and instructed him, "Go and station yourself at the mouth of a cave at a particular place. You will be able to see wayfarers travelling along the path there but they will not be able to see you. From there you will be able to observe My mysteries in action." Hadhrat Musa (AS) went and stationed himself at the spot indicated by Allah Ta'ala. After a very short while a person on a horse arrived. The path was adjacent to a stream where wayfarers used to stop to refresh themselves. The weather was hot. The wayfarer alighted from his horse and, placing a satchel that he with him on the ground, refreshed himself with water from the stream, ate from his provisions, climbed back on his horse and departed. He forgot to pick up his satchel and take it with him! Take careful note of this point. Very shortly, another wayfarer passed by there. He saw the satchel, picked it up and walked away with it. Again, very shortly after this, a third wayfarer came that way, a poor wood cutter carrying a bundle of wood on his head. He stopped there, lay down his bundle, sat next to the stream and washed his hands and face. In the meantime, the first wayfarer on the horse thought of his satchel, remembered that he had left it at that particular spot by the stream, and returned to retrieve it. All the while Hadhrat Musa (AS) is observing closely to what was happening. The wayfarer on the horse returned and saw this person washing himself and then anxiously looked around

for his satchel, but obviously, the satchel was nowhere to be found. He demanded from the woodcutter, "I forgot my satchel here just a short while ago. There is nobody else here besides you. Give me back my satchel!" This poor woodcutter denied all knowledge of the satchel, but the first wayfarer would not believe him and kept on insisting that he wanted his satchel back, "There is nobody else here besides you. You must have taken it!" The woodcutter kept on denying any knowledge of it. It was an age where people carried their weapons with them. The first wayfarer took out his sword and killed the woodcutter, turned his back on him, climbed on his horse and rode away.

Hadhrat Musa (AS) was struck with astonishment. Someone else took the satchel and this person, who did not take the satchel, busy washing his hands and face, is beheaded. What an amazing turn of events! Hadhrat Musa (AS) asked Allah Ta'ala, "O Allah! I do not understand at all!" Allah Ta'ala said, "I told you beforehand that you cannot fathom My mysteries. Have you observed My mysteries?" Hadhrat Musa (AS) said, "Allah, please explain to me." Allah Ta'ala explained, "The father of the rider on the horse - the one whose satchel was taken - had at one stage stolen a thousand dinaar from the wealth of the second wayfarer. Therefore, the second wayfarer, who took the satchel, was compensated in that the satchel, containing a thousand dinaar, was returned to him from the inheritance of the first wayfarer." As to the one who was beheaded, there also lies an amazing tale: "The wood cutter, who was beheaded, had murdered the father of the first wayfarer. The son of the murdered man was given the opportunity to avenge the murder of his father." Obviously, all three involved were not aware of the reasons for the events, but

justice was finally meted out. "Musa, each had his right restored to him. Your mind cannot reach to such depths."

حق را باحق رسي

The rights have been restored to those who have rights.

Hadhrat Musa (AS) said, "Yaa Allahmia! Nobody can unravel Your mysteries!" Have you seen? The unseen is known only by Allah Ta'ala. This is of His special attributes.

Is there anything more to say? Yes, something does come to mind. I hope that our sisters and mothers are listening carefully! When something happens that is contrary to one's temperament - something causing sadness, grief, despondency or some harm or somebody's demise - one tends to lose control of oneself. Then there is crying and wailing, clothes are shred, there is cessation of eating and drinking, and the thought is there that one does not know what treasures have slipped from our hands. One's gaze shifts away from Allah Ta'ala. Some become completely depressed and do not leave their beds. Stop to think and ponder on the following qissah, also connected to Divine mysteries:

The mysteries behind the death of a kaafir and a mu'min

Two persons became very ill, one was a Yahud, a kaafir, and the other was a Muslim, a mu'min. The Yahudi kaafir had a desire, "I am close to death. I wish I could eat some fish!" The Muslim mu'min also had a wish, "I am dying. If I could just have some olive oil!" The one was anxious to have his wish of eating fish

fulfilled and the other was anxious to have his wish of having some olive oil fulfilled. Allah Ta'ala summoned two malaa'ikah. To the one Allah Ta'ala gave the instruction, "There are no fish in his pond. Place a fish in the pond for the Yahud to eat." To the other malaa'ikah Allah Ta'ala gave the instruction, "The Muslim mu'min wishes to have some olive oil. There is bottle of olive oil on a shelf in his house. Take the bottle and destroy it with the olive oil so that he cannot have it.!"

Until the full account is not heard, one does not what kind of thoughts and doubts go through our minds. This is why one should listen to a lecture (bayaan) till the end. A bayaan is such that midway through one topic another and then another topic is discussed, with the speaker coming back to complete the incomplete topics which were only partially discussed.

To continue: Both the malaa'ikah met on the way to fulfil their tasks. The one asked the other, "Where are you going?" The first one said, "I have been ordered to go to a particular Yahud. He has a desire to eat some fish, and there are no fish in his pond, so I have to place one in it for him to eat. Where are you off to?" "I have been ordered to go to the house of a Muslim. He has a desire to partake of some olive oil. There is a bottle of olive oil on a shelf in his house. My instructions are to destroy the bottle and the olive oil so that he cannot have it." The second malaa'ikah enquired from the first, "Did you ask Allah Ta'ala why?" The first one said, "Yes, I did. I said, ‘O Allah! The Yahudi kaafir is dying and You are fulfilling his dying wish and heart's desire. There is no fish, yet You are seeing to his wish. What is the wisdom behind this?" "What was the reply?"

Our sisters and mothers should listen very carefully to this!

"Allah Ta'ala said, ‘Whenever the Yahud had performed any goodness in the world, I had compensated him in the world with some khair.'"

Note that good deeds performed in this world fall into two categories: One is where the intention is to attain some qurb - that is, attain some thawaab, attain some reward, attain closeness to Allah Ta'ala, attain His pleasure, attain higher stages in Jannat. The other category is where the intention is solely to benefit the creation. One finds others give water to drink to the thirsty in hot weather, feed animals, give charity and assist people with problems out of a sense of compassion, and so forth.

"Allah Ta'ala continued, ‘He is now on the point of dying. He has to his credit one good deed, for which he has still not been compensated. He has this strong desire to eat fish. I want his desire to be fulfilled so that he is compensated in this world for the good he has done. And, in the hereafter, he proceeds straight into Jahannam. That is why I have instructed you to feed him the fish.'"

Are you pondering over this?

The first malaa'ikah then asked the second one, "Did you enquire as to why you had to destroy the olive oil for the Muslim not to be able to partake of it?" "Yes, I did." "What did Allah Ta'ala say?" "Allah Ta'ala said, ‘Whenever this mu'min Muslim bandah committed any sin, I afflicted him with some problem contrary to his temperament (tabiyat), some difficulty, some sadness and grief, some problem.

He made sabr (showed patience and fortitude), on account of which I washed away his sins.'"

Ponder over this. Allah Ta'ala is ArhamurrahImaan - The most merciful of all those who show mercy. Something comes to mind. Let me narrate it before I forget.

Marrying a second wife

A woman came to Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (RA). She asked him, "Hadhrat, my husband wants to marry a second wife - what do you have to say on this matter?" Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (RA) replied, "Dear sister, Allah Ta'ala states in the Qur'an Shareef,

ا فَوَاحِدَةً فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلاَّ تَعْدِلُو

"... and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many), then one only..." (4:3)

If a man wishes to marry a second time, having one wife already, and he can be fair and do justice, then there is permission to do so, and if he is unable to be fair and do justice then it is not permissible to marry a second wife. If he wants to marry a second wife, what is the problem? It is permissible." The woman responded, "Hadhrat, if the Shari'at were to have allowed me, I would have taken off my veil from my face and revealed my face to you, and then asked you, ‘Being married to one as beautiful as I - would it be even remotely justified for him to let his gaze fall on anyone else?'" These words were hardly out of her mouth when Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (RA) fell unconscious in a spell of ecstasy. The woman went away. When Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (RA) regained his senses, his Khidim-

e-Khas (special attendant/ close disciple) asked, "Hadhrat, what was the reason for you to have been engulfed in ecstacy?" Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (RA) replied, "The woman's words reminded me of the Hadith Shareef wherein Allah Ta'ala states that, ‘O My bondsmen, the veils of Nur (celestial effulgence) that lie between Me and you, if it was possible for you to see Me, I would have lifted these veils of Nur between Me and you, and I would have revealed Myself to you, and I would have asked you that, I being the (Majestic) Deity that I am, would you be justified in letting your gaze fall elsewhere?'" Ponder over this.

From here one should understand the position that one wife has. In this age men are finding it difficult to fulfil the rights of one wife, how can anybody picture having a second marriage and additional children? You are not so young and strong, and neither is there the physical strength to fulfil the rights of two wives, when the rights of one are being fulfilled with difficulty, nor is there the wealth to treat both wives equally, nor is there the wealth to provide both with the same houses - to give to the other wife a house to the same value as the first one was given. The value of food and clothing given to the one has to be the same as the value of the food and clothes given to the other. The amount of hours and minutes spent at night with the one has to be equal to the hours and minutes spent with the other. If the time spent with one exceeds the time spent with the other the rights of the latter have been usurped - one has committed zulm (oppression).

There is something else to remember as well: The one wife to whom you are already married - whether you married her having seen her before or without seeing her - may speak some harsh words at times, may be obstinate at times and

may address you in an unsuitable terms at times, but the second wife will definitely be worse than the first one! Do not have any hope that the second wife will be angelic. Why so? The reason is that women, as many as there be existing, even though they may be the wives of a kings, even though they may be the wives of the Awliya-Allah (friends of Allah Ta'ala / saints), they has been created from a crooked rib! You young people should remember this very well. Do not ever mention a second marriage. Also, do not ever take the name of talaaq (divorce). She may ask for a talaaq a thousand times - and she will definitely make this request - but do not do so.

The nature of women

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had already stated long ago:

......تكفرن العشير ما رأيت من ناقصات عقل و دين أذهب للب الرجل

You (women) show immense ingratitude to your husbands. You are deficient in intelligence and are so crafty that you chew up the intelligence of even the most clever and intelligent men!

Do you understand? Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had already mentioned this beforehand - he had foretold this. Have a proper understanding of this before getting married. And once you are married, stick to one! Live like a man.

Women have been told, "You show ingratitude." Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has also said that you may give your wife gold filling the world, but the

day that you do something that upsets her, she will turn around and say, "Since the day I have come to this house, I have had no comfort! My mother and father gave me away without looking properly. My kismet (fate) is broken. Since I have come to this moribund house I have never been at ease. Give me talaaq." Let her carry on using the word talaaq. After all, she is a woman - she will speak irrationally. You, O Male, have been created simply from sand: Hadhrat Aadam (AS) was created from clay, whereas Hadhrat Hawwa (AS) was created from the crooked rib of Hadhrat Aadam (AS), and from the left side, at that! Mind you, not from the right side, but from the left side. So, there are two kinks in her creation. Now, it is possible to straighten everything - I have been to a steel plant and saw steel being melted and molded into ingots, so steel can be shaped and straightened - but, dear brother, if you think that you can straighten your wife, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has said it will not happen, but will break - that is, it will end in talaaq. Do not ever try to attempt to straighten her. Yes, if you see something her temperament will accept, explain to her. In essence, do not pay heed to her words. Make as if you are deaf. And when you are deaf then you are dumb as well - if you do not hear, how can you answer back?

A unique way of creating peace

Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA) told us a qissah:

A certain person's wife went to a buzurg with a complaint. "Hadhrat! My husband is causing me tremendous vexation with his scoldings." The buzurg immediately

understood the situation. The husband says one thing and the wife says four things in retaliation. Her tongue never tires.

Just now we were sitting silently for quite some time and nobody spoke. You may have observed that, in the home situation, when the wife does not say anything, the husband will have nothing to say. Only if she says something will he respond to her. When several men get together they are able to remain silent for long periods, but let just two women come together, then there is no room for silence! Therefore, become deaf and dumb and the argument will not progress any further.

To continue: When the wife came with her complaint, the buzurg immediately understood the situation. He said, "Bring some water and I will recite something over it." She brought the water. He mumbled something and then said, "Take this water with you. When your husband starts saying things to you, take a gulp of the water from this bottle and sit down. Do not swallow it and do not spit it out. The arguments will cease." She took the water and left. Now, whenever the husband became a bit harsh in his speech, she would take a gulp of the water and sit down, neither swallowing the water nor spitting it out. The husband now had nothing to respond to. After a few days both the husband and the wife had stopped the arguments.

The position of the husband

What is the position of your husband? He is a male after all. He is the head. He may not be making salaah and he may be immoral, but for you, the wife, he is your leader. It is incumbent on you to be considerate and have adab (respect) for him. It

is a different matter if you do not show any respect to him, he ignores your disrespect and discourtesy. However, after marriage, the wife is not bound to serve the father or obey the commands of her father as much as she is bound to obey the orders of her husband.

Obedience to the husband: a qissah

Our sisters and mothers should listen attentively to the following incident which occurred in the time of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam):

The husband of a particular lady, when he was about to leave home, instructed his wife, "Do not set your foot outside the house until my return." There was pardah in that age, not as we see nowadays that husband himself walks hand in hand with his wife in public, making an exhibition of himself. Our experienced elders used to say, "Once you have allowed the feet of your wife to leave the threshold of your home, and you then wish her to stay confined to the house, you will not find her at home any longer." This is an observation that comes from experience, dear brothers. We have allowed her out, so the blame lies with us.

So, this Sahaabi (RA) went away, leaving these instructions with his wife. The lady's father fell ill. He sent a message to her with somebody that he wished to see her. She replied, "Ask Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) the mas'alah, that my husband had left these instructions, so should I go or not?" Rasulullah's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) reply was that it was not jaa'iz (not permissible) for her to go. She did not go. Do you see her qualities? On the second day the message came, "Your father is now close to death. Now go and visit him." She gave the

same reply as before, and Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) gave the same reply, "It was not permissible for her to leave the house as her husband had forbidden her. She was not set her foot outside." On the third day her father passed away. Somebody came to inform her, "Now that he has passed away, go and see him."She still gave the same reply. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Even now it is not jaa'iz for her to leave the house. Her husband had forbidden her."

It is a different matter that the husband should allow his wife to visit her parents once a year, whether they call her at their expense or not at their expense. If Allah Ta'ala has given him the means, then he should do so at his own expense. Allow her to stay some days with them. The parents also should not refuse the husband's request to have her back. They may request, "Our hearts desire she should longer." However, if he insists that she should go back, then they should concede, "She is yours. Take her away." There should neither be refusal from the one side nor insistence from the other side. Yes, once a year let her meet her parents.

On the reply of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), she stayed at home and did not go. Her father was given ghusl and the kafan was wrapped around him, the Janazah salaah was performed and he was buried. When Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) returned home after the burial, wahi (Divine Revelation) came down, Hadhrat Jibra'il (AS) came and delivered a message. After he had left, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) summoned a Sahaabi (RA) and told him, "Go and inform the lady who had been asking the mas'alah concerning leaving the house where her husband had forbidden her to leave the house, even though her

father became ill and passed away, and I had told her that it was not permissible to go out from the house - go and tell her that wahi has come from Allah Ta'ala, stating, ‘Convey salaam to her and tell her that because she had acted on the Shari'at, that she acted on the instructions of her husband and did not go to see her father, on this basis I have forgiven her father.'" Say, for instance, she had gone to see her father, what would have happened? She would have shed a few more tears, but she would never have been blessed with the blessing she attained by acting on the Shari'at. By acting according to the Shari'at, by virtue of the nisbat that this order had with Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), she attained the forgiveness of her father. This is something to ponder over.

On the topic of this forgiveness and the importance of pardah I wish to end off. There are women also listening in, and should not be left out. Men have ample opportunities to listen to discourses, but they do not have many occasions to listen to these discourses and this discourse is basically meant for them. So, this mas'alah is very important for them. Whether she observes pardah or not, she knows best, but at least, the importance of pardah becomes known. And the tawfeeq for taubah will follow and the womenfolk will come to know about the punishment for not observing pardah. They are unaware. However, after being made aware - should I tell you? - the effects of these topics coming to the ears of women, women have started adopting pardah.

Just a little while ago, along the way, one person informed me: an owner of a big cinema, having a massive income, left the cinema business, by the Fadhl of Allah Ta'ala - another example of the effect of such talks. Many women have started

adopting pardah on their own. This is a sign of the sharaafat of being a saalik - the nobility and virtuous character of the true seeker of Haqq. Previously they were unaware. Now they have been informed. You have seen the effect of nisbat where a person listens to advice given.

Not covering the hair: a qissah

In the district of Saharanpur, there is a town called Manglor, a woman passed away and was buried. Her brother was among those who buried her. He was a government employee. After the burial, when they left he felt for some papers he had with him. He searched his pockets but could not find them. He went to search at home, but could not find them there. He then realised that the papers must have fallen out at the time he was bending down when burying his sister. The papers were some important official papers and not his own personal papers. He took some other persons with him and had the grave dug up again. He found the envelope with the papers in the grave, but what did he observe? He saw that the hair, which are normally divided into two sections, the section from the right side of the head being placed over the chest on the right side and the section from the left side of the head being placed over the left chest, had become somewhat tangled. His sister's hair from the right side were entwined around the big toe of the left foot and her hair from the left side were entwined around the big toe of the right big toe. It formed somewhat like a catapult. As a result her head was pulled up little from the ground and her feet were also pulled up slightly from the ground. He thought to himself, "She must be in considerable discomfort." He stretched his hand to loosen the hair from the toes and he suddenly felt a searing pain in his

fingers as he touched the hair. The hair was so terribly hot that he burnt his fingers. He immediately withdrew his hand, quickly re-buried her and went home. He tried treating his hand, but no remedy could stop the searing pain. He went to a buzurg, who gave him some special water over which he had recited something, to dip his hand in. Whenever he kept his hand in this water he found relief. The moment he withdrew his hand from the water, the pain commenced again. The burning pain remained for some days. He asked the buzurg why this happened to him. The buzurg replied, "It would appear that your sister was not observing pardah with gair-marhams. She apparently left her hair uncovered in front of these gair-marhams. Allah Ta'ala serves out punishment according to the crime. Her punishment is through her very hair. The hair have been heated in the fire of Jahannam and entwined around her toes." Just compare the situation of the other lady from Paris, because of the nisbat of acting according to the Shari'at, to that of this woman who did not bother about the Shari'at, and what the results were for both.

These topics came in when we were speaking about Hadhrat Musa (AS). I was saying that he was unaware of the mysteries of Allah Ta'ala. In the one incident each person received his just deserts.

حق را بالحق رسید

Without knowing it, the traveller on the horse avenged the death of his father, and the rightful owner of the money was restored his wealth. These are unfathomable mysteries. Similarly, in the other incident, the kaafir being granted his dying wish

of eating fish, so that he may have no good to his credit anymore and enter Jahannam on dying. And the mu'min bandah being deprived the joy of having some olive oil, so that, by being deprived of this desire, he was compensated for the one sin for which he had not made taubah, so that he may enter Jannat directly on passing away.

Importance of taubah

Taubah is an act we should never dispense with. After having inadvertently committed a sin, we should make taubah immediately. Not only that, but even after having performed ‘ibaadat we should also make taubah as completion of that ‘ibaadat. In any case, when a mu'min bandah makes taubah Allah Ta'ala is very fond of him. Sin is a filth and impurity. How can He send anyone with the filth of sins on him, into Jannat? One can see that there are certain matters which even the malaa'ikah are not aware of, and even a Nabi is not aware of and they have to enquire from Allah Ta'ala.

Concluding the topic of tashabbah

We had digressed when we were discussing the qissah of Hadhrat Musa (AS) and the magicians. Hadhrat Musa (AS) asked Allah Ta'ala, "O Allah! There is something I do not understand: You sent me to Fir'oun for his guidance. He did not accept the invitation to tauhid, but the magicians, who came to challenge me, you gave them the tawfeeq to bring Imaan. They proclaimed, ‘We bring Imaan on the Rabb of Musa (AS) and Harun (AS)'. Why so? You granted them the tawfeeq to bring Imaan but deprived Fir'oun of the tawfeeq of bringing Imaan."

What was the reply Allah Ta'ala gave? These are matters to ponder over. Our sisters and mothers should reflect on this - by coming here you have honoured me - and give it your consideration.

Allah Ta'ala said, "O Musa, what you say is correct: I did sent you for the guidance of Fir'oun, but he performed no such deed that entitled him to be granted the tawfeeq. However, as far as the magicians are concerned, they had assumed the same type of clothes that you did. When I saw that they had worn the same type of clothes as My Nabi, that they were imitating him in their dressing and appearance, I had a feeling of ghairat (blushfulness/ sense of honour) that they had imitated My Nabi, why should I deprive them? Why should I not grant them tawfeeq on this action of theirs? That is why I granted them the tawfeeq to bring Imaan and they brought Imaan."

Do you see? Have you understood the mas'alah of tashabbah? By imitating one who is pious, Allah Ta'ala granted the tawfeeq towards the piety of Imaan. On the other hand, despite making salaah, etc., see what happened to that person from Makkah Mu'azzamah? Merely on him saying that the ruling of the Christians with regard to the ghusl of janaabat was better than that of Islam, he passed away without Imaan. Remember very well that a person's Imaan does not slip away right up to the time of death. Imaan is snatched away before death. May Allah Ta'ala preserve our Imaan till the time of our last breath, with izzat (honour) and ‘aafiyat (ease and comfort). What happens is that Imaan is snatched away long before. It is only manifested and revealed at the time of death that the person is dying without Imaan. It is at the time of death that the person is shown to have died without

Imaan, that he was a non-Muslim. Allahummah-faznaa - may Allah Ta'ala safeguard us and preserve our Imaan with izzat and ‘aafiyat, till the time of death.

Tashabbah is not an insignificant mas'alah - it is a very grave matter. One should exercise the greatest caution in making any statements or dressing in a way that would be construed as tashabbah.

What can one say? Have you seen also the positive side of tashabbah as well? The magicians imitated Hadhrat Musa (AS) with an ulterior motive, yet the Allah Ta'ala's ghairat caused the magicians to be blessed with the tawfeeq of bringing Imaan? Ghairat is also an important quality.

Enter into Islam fully

After discussing all these subjects, the aayet which I had recited initially, has been left out. In connection with this aayet let me state that all these topics will be included in this aayet. This is not the occasion for going into more details. What has Allah Ta'ala stated in this aayet that was recited?

يَا أَيُّهَاالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَافَّةً وَلاَ تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ

O ye with Imaan (men and women)! Enter ye into Islam...(2:208)

Imaan is the name given to aqaa'id (beliefs) - those few concepts that have to be affirmed in the heart. Islam is the name of the expression of the demands of that Imaan connected external actions and deeds. So, what Allah Ta'ala is saying is:

O ye with Imaan (whether ye be men or women)! Enter ye into Islam fully and completely.

This is what Allah Ta'ala is saying. The emphasis is, "fully and completely". We have explained the meaning and details of "fully and completely" for some time now. Let us now review the concept. It encompasses ‘ibaadat, mu'amulaat, mu'aasharat and akhlaaq (worship, dealings and transactions, social behaviour and relationships, and character and manners), and it also encompasses the mas'alah of tashabbah - what is that tauhid demands. I have stated initially what is shirk (polytheism). When a wife will not tolerate sharing her husband with another and a husband will not tolerate sharing his wife with another, how can Allah Ta'ala tolerate partnerships with Him? There are two categories of shirk, one is shirk-e-jalli (major shirk), which is tantamount to kufr; and the other is shirk-e-khafi (minor shirk) from where the smell of kufr is exuding, contrary to the concept of tauhid.

This hasad (jealousy) is not appropriate for a Muslim, one with Imaan. It is the quality of Shaitan - he is the first to show this hasad against Hadhrat Aadam (AS)and consequently became accursed. Hasad means objecting to the action of Allah Ta'ala: Why has He granted another such a big house? Why has He blessed him that he eats lavishly? Etc. This is not the occasion to go into details. A hint is sufficient for the intelligent.

To continue: Allah Ta'ala is saying, "O ye with Imaan (whether ye be men or women)! Enter ye into Islam fully and completely. It must not be that you believe

in Rehman and your aqeedah is on Rehman, but in your actions you are in accord with the thinking of Shaitan. Do not walk in the footsteps of Shaitan; do not fall into the trap set by Shaitan. Is it an intelligent thing to do? Do you not know that Shaitan is your open enemy?"

Dealing with one's enemy

Does one believe what one's enemy tells one? Even if one's enemy were to say something that appears beneficial, for one's well-being, one should not accept it. He is our enemy, even though he gives advice of goodness. Allah Ta'ala is stating that he is our open foe. If he is the enemy of your forefathers as well and you are making friends with him? What is the ghairat within you saying? Are you going to listen to the words of your enemy in contradiction to that of your forefathers? What type of intelligence is this? Do we all understand this? Whether the enemy is one's own or that of one's forefathers, one should not believe in what he says. And Shaitan is your enemy. He is the enemy of Rehman. Shaitan is the enemy of Allah Ta'ala, the Rasul of Allah and your enemy, so, how can you ever listen to him? He is your open enemy.

The full explanation of this aayet is rather long, and this is not the time to go into the details. However, when this concept has been understood from this aayet, then ponder over the topics that were discussed earlier on. Avoid falling into the traps of Shaitan. Oppose his plans. Some aspects of following him have been mentioned. Whether from the aspects of ‘ibaadat, mu'amulaat, mu'aasharat or akhlaaq (worship, dealings and transactions, social behaviour and relationships, or

character and manners), or the aspects of tashabbah, or pardah, or approaching others from amongst the creation with softness, or saving oneself from gussah (anger) or keenah (malice) - which are Shaitani characteristics - we should enter into Islam fully and completely.

Importance of Monday and Thursday

Listening and discussing is for the purpose of acting accordingly, for one to focus and ponder on one's shortcomings and weaknesses, and save oneself from these. At the minimum, when the days of Monday and Thursday arrive, one should picture in one's mind the following: "Today, our deeds will be presented to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). At least let this Monday/ Thursday should pass without me committing any sins." Let these days, at least, pass by with the above thought in mind. Contemplating in this manner, Insha-Allah, these two days will pass without committing sins, and when one keeps on contemplating repeatedly along these lines, a time will come when one will avoid being caught in the clutches of Shaitan, as Allah Ta'ala knows the talab (desire/ quest) that is in one. Allah Ta'ala is the One Who blesses with tawfeeq.

The discourse is approaching its end. Just to emphasise that we should not harbour such negative thoughts that we have a multitude of sins and if we make taubah today we will break the taubah tomorrow. Who can be certain whether the taubah will be maintained or not? Similarly, who can say whether sins will be committed again or not? Having made taubah, at that time the sins are forgiven. So, make taubah every night before sleeping. It may happen that one's Ruh (soul) departs

during the night in one's sleep, and having made taubah before sleeping, one's sins have been forgiven. Also, make this resolve that if there are any rights to fulfil with regard to any person, one will make the effort to fulfil these rights. Allah Ta'ala is well aware of one's intention (niy'yet). Remember: Deeds are judged by their intentions. So, make a definite point of making taubah at night before sleeping, with remorse in one's heart. And respect the days of Monday and Thursday. And do not let the wiswasah of Shaitan enter one's mind that he did not make taubah and that he will not allow you to make taubah. And remember very well that, when the bandah makes taubah with a remorseful heart, the thought of remorse has just occurred, and he has not as yet lifted his hands to plead, Allah Ta'ala states, "I have accepted your taubah!" Four thousand years before Hadhrat Aadam (AS) was created, Allah Ta'ala had written on all four sides of the ‘Arsh (Divine Throne):

وَإِنِّي لَغَفَّارٌ لِمَنْ تَابَ

Definitely but definitely, I shall forgive that person who has made taubah to me.

Do not let the thought even come near you that what will happen if the taubah breaks. If this happens, make taubah again. And if, perchance, it breaks, make taubah again. Maulana Rumi (RA) writes in his famous compilation, Al-Mathnawi, addressing those who are kaafir, sun-worshippers, fire-worshippers, idolaters:

بز ؛ یاز اگر کافر و گبرو بت پرستی باز ا باز ا بر انچه بست

ستی نی دی ن درگه نو امی ا

Allah Ta'ala states, "Come away, come away, whatever you may have done, come away. Whether you are a kaafir, a sun-worshipper, a fire-worshipper, an idolater, come away. This is Our Royal Court. It is not one of hopelessness. Even if your taubah has broken a hundred times, then too, do not give up hope. Even now, if you make taubah, you will be forgiven.

Allah Ta'ala has desired that we should make taubah:

مـن تـاب تـاب الله عليـه

When any bandah directs his attention towards Allah Ta'ala, He turns with mercy towards him. Allah Ta'ala is virtually saying, "Seeing he is turning his attention to Me with remorse, I turn My attention towards him with mercy." Hadhrat Musa (AS) had asked Allah Ta'ala, "Whose voice is loved by You?" Allah Ta'ala replied, "The voice of that person who, with remorse, makes taubah - his purified voice is loved by Me. He calls on Me once and I respond to him twice. He calls out, ‘Yaa Rabbi,' (O my Lord and Cherisher), and I respond with, ‘Labbaik, Labbaik, Yaa Abdi,' (I am present, I am present, O My bondsman. What is it that you desire?)." One should never keep oneself aloof from taubah. The Court of Allah Ta'ala is ever open. Allah Ta'ala states, "There should never be any degree of hopelessness as far as We are concerned. Entertaining the feeling of hopelessness is that of the kuffaar:

إِنَّهُ لاَ يَيْئَسُ مِنْ رَوْحِ اللهِ إِلاَّ الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

Lo! None despaireth of the spirit of Allah save disbelieving folk. (12:87)

The mu'min is told - do not feel that there is no hope.

Therefore, at no stage should one be concerned as to what will happen if one's taubah breaks. Tell yourself firmly, "I shall make taubah again! I shall make taubah again!" As we were saying, Maulana Rumi (RA) states, relaying Allah Ta'ala's statement in these tones:

باز آ باز آ ہر آنچہ ہستی باز آ گر کافر و گبر و بت پرستی باز آ

ایں درگہ ما درگہ نومیدی نیست

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the tawfeeq to tread along the path of His Orders, with ittiba' of the Sunnat. May Allah Ta'ala safeguard us from committing sins. If perchance - Allah Ta'ala forbid! - we should commit any sins, may He grant us th tawfeeq to make taubah.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمین

خدا حافظ

Chapter No.:

19

Foreword

Roshni & Indhera - Light & Darkness

Adl (Justice) and Be-adlí (Injustice)

Tawádhu (Humility) and Takabbur (Arrogance)

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Maseehullah Khan Sahib (RA) was born in Sarai Barlah in the district of Aligarh in the year 1329 or1330 H. Hadhrat's (RA) lineage is linked to the noble Sharwani family of landed nobility, and being linked to Sayyid Hussain Ghauri (RA), the lineage is also Sayyid. Hadhrat (RA) attended the local government school up to standard six, but did not continue with his secular education, preferring to study Din, which he studied initially in his home town, and thereafter completing his studies in Deoband. Hadhrat (RA) became bay't to Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA), from whom Hadhrat (RA) received his Khilaafat

the same year that Hadhrat (RA) qualified from Deoband. Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA) stationed Hadhrat (RA) in Jalalabad, where Hadhrat (RA) established the madrassah, Miftahul-Uloom, and a khanqah where saalikin stayed for their self-rectification. He passed away in Jalalabad on the 17th Jamaadul-Ulaa 1413 H. (14th November 1992).

Published by Dr. Ismail Mangera

e-mail: imangera@cybertrade.co.za

Alhamdulillah, once again, solely through the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my Sheikh (RA) - also, not forgetting the valued du'ás of our readers - this seventeenth discourse is ready. (This is to place on record once more that I am indebted to many others in the publication of these majális. The tape for this majlis was given to me by brother Yusuf Bulbulia. Muftí Masúd Mewatí Sáhib, Muftí Hashim Boda Sáhib and Muftí Faeheem Mayet Sáhib assisted with the translations.)

The month of Ramadhán is always a memorable month. This is that special month in the Islámic calendar that causes Muslims all over the world to re-invigorate their ímán. No matter what the condition of the Muslim is, this individual finds it easy to give up bad habits and make more 'Ibádat In the blessed month.

This special atmosphere is especially noticeable where there is a masjid in the locality, where many more people are to be seen coming for the different namázes. People are seen carrying their little packets, dishes and flasks at the time of sunset, ready to break their fasts. With the Taráwíh prayer being performed at night, with

the huffáz reciting the Qur'án Sharíf in their melodious voices, this special feeling that pervades during the month of Ramadhán, is more enhanced.

This brings me to Jalálábád: What was the routine there during Ramadhán? Those who had spent Ramadhán there will vouchsafe that this month was really memorable. The Khánqah used to be full, with the overflow of people staying in the madrasah section. Taráwíh was performed at various venues, including the madrasah masjid as well as in the classrooms.

Our Hadhrat (RA) used to make his Íshá salát in the Muniwálí Masjid but performed the Taráwíh salát in the courtyard in front of the majliskháná. The interesting part of the Taráwíh salát was that only one háfiz used to perform all twenty rakats until the completion of the Qur'án Sharíf. Our Hadhrat (RA) did not approve of the system of two or more huffáz performing the Taráwíh by sharing the twenty rakats between them. This did not allow any one háfiz to recite the whole Qur'án Sharíf by himself in the Taráwíh.

Sehrí was eaten individually and not collectively. Each individual woul prepare his own meal and eat it in his room. The same applied to iftár. According to the rules laid down, association with one another was strictly forbidden, unless there was a great need to have contact with others. Having meals together or inviting others to one's room in the Khánqah for meals was not allowed. Sálikín also did not sit in i'tikáf, as this would have meant that they would not have been able to attend the various majális that Hadhratjí (RA) conducted.

Sálikín were encouraged to recite more Qur'án Sharíf in this month and, of course, be punctual with their attendance at the majális. There were no collective programmes laid out for those who were staying in the Khánqah.

Seeing that the madrasas were closed during the month of Ramadhán, many ulema' came to spend some time in Jalálábád. Their presence created an additional lustre to the place. However, more than their presence, more than the fact that the Khánqah was full, was the fact that the rúhániyat that emanated from Hadhratjí (RA) was at an exceptionally high level.

During this month a definite difference was also noted in the content of the majális that our Hadhrat (RA) conducted. The topics were discussed at a higher level and many finer points were also discussed. Seeing that there were a significant number of ulema' and students present, many aspects were addressed to them specifically.

The majlis that has been translated in this issue of "For Friends" was conducted on the first of Ramadhán 1412, corresponding to the 7th March 1992. Our Hadhrat (RA) passed away on the 14th November of the same year. That is, this was our Hadhrat's (RA) last Ramadhán.

Our du'á is that Alláh Ta'álá grants us the tawfíq to act according to the precious teachings of our Hadhrat (RA).

Dr. I.M.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

على رسوله الكريم نحمده و نصلي

[Majlis held by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib (RA) in Jalálábád on the 1st Ramadhán 1412, corresponding to the 7th March 1992.]

ROSHNÍ & INDHERá - LIGHT & DARKNESS

There is feebleness in my health.

Indherá and Roshní - Darkness and Light - are opposites. Similarly, fujúr (wickedness) and taqwá (piety) are opposites. Light is excellent, but, at times excessive light will cause one to be distressed. There should be i'tidál (equilibrium) in everything. This is the haqíqat (reality) and this is the yaqín (conviction) of all the Ambiyá (AS).

Adl (Justice) and Be-adlí (Injustice)

If there is be-adlí (injustice) from others towards one, but from onself, one should not stop behaving with adl (justice). Do you understand? To repeat: If there is be-adlí (injustice) from others, but from onself, one should not leave the reigns of adl (justice) in one's behaviour to them. To have developed this degree of adl and have it entrenched in one's temperament, is referred to as Maqáme-Adl.

For example: The wife does not behave with adl. She follows the route of be-adlí (injustice). Perfection (kamál) is that the husband should not discard adl in his behaviour with such a wife when she exhibits her be-adlí. What kamál is it to behave in a good manner with one who's behaviour is good? To behave correctly with evil people - this is an act of kamál! This is husne-sulúk (beautiful manners)! (Sulúk has two meanings: (1) Behaviour; manners; kindness.(2) In Sufí

terminology Sulúk refers to the Path of Tariqat or Tasawwuf), that the initiate (muríd) follows to develop a bond with Alláh Ta'álá.

From this husne-sulúk there enters beautification in one's Sharí'at. There is another way of putting it: until husne-sulúk - here the term "sulúk" refers to "Tasawwuf" - has not been attained, husne-Sharí'at can never be achieved. And husn (beauty) is liked by everybody - in everybody's eyes it is a quality that is loved. And why should husne-Sharí'at not be loved by everybody?

That is why "Sharí'at" has been attached to "Taríqat", irrespective of whether you call it "Tasawwuf" or "Sulúk" or whether you call it "Haqíqat", because the true meaning of Taríqat is as follows: Whatever task, in whatever manner, at whatever time, we have been ordered to perform, to perform that task in that manner, is called Taríqat.

Sharí'at is: Ahkáme-munazzal minnalláh: Those orders which have been sent down by Alláh Ta'álá. These Ahkáme-munazzal minnalláh may be connected to the záhir or to the bátin. Only when one observes and gives full consideration to the directions which accompanied the orders, at the time of carrying out the orders, will it be said that the orders have been carried out. This would be termed Taríqat. If one were to deviate from the directions that accompanied these orders, this would not be termed discharging these orders.

Now, darkness (zulmat) has its methodology and light (roshní) also has its methodology - there is a need for equilibrium (adl) in both. If one deviates from the adl, it means that one has deviated from the correct method, and the moment

one deviates from the correct method, this cannot be termed as having performed the task.

Tawádhu (Humility) and Takabbur (Arrogance)

Take tawádhu and takabbur: Tawádhu is a light, a radiance (roshní). Takabbur is a darkness (indherá). There should be i'tidál in both. There should adl in both. You present here are Sáhibe-'Ilm (Ulemá). You are aware that in the Sharí'at both ifrát and tafrít (Ifrát - overdo; do in excess. Tafrít - to underdo; the lower extreme. Ifrát-o-Tafrít - to go to either extremes). are forbidden. The position between ifrát and tafrít is called adl.

The reality of takabbur is something else. There is takabbur súrí (Súrí - outward; external. (This is explained in detail later.) Haqíqí - real; inner). and takabbur haqíqí. Takabbur súrí is one thing and takabbur haqíqí is something else. Until takabbur haqíqí has not been eliminated and tawádhu haqíqí has not been achieved, it is ná-já'iz to utilise takabbur súrí. Until tawádhu haqíqí has not set in, it is not correct to make use of what is contrary to tawádhu. Otherwise one will suffer harm and one will land up in difficulties. One will not be able to safeguard one's honour. One will not be able to save oneself from situations of disgrace, whereas it is fardh to save oneself from situations of humiliation.

Honour and Disgrace

Some situations appear to be those of disgrace... (Listen carefully now, for this is how this old is man presenting it to you!) Sometimes the situations have the

appearance of disgrace, but they are situations of honour in the eyes of others, even though the sense of it being honourable is absent within oneself.

For example: You are going somewhere. Along the rural area you come across another person sitting with a bundle of something or other. As you are passing by him, he calls out, "Ají Miají!" You have a proper beard; you are wearing a kurtah as well, neither a mini-one nor the long one of the style of the Arabs, but of some length; and the legs of your ijár are above your ankles, so you appear to be a "miají" in the eyes of onlookers. And you, incidentally, are also an 'álim, one who has graduated as an 'álim from a Dárul-Ulúm. So, this person sitting there calls out, "Ají Miají! Are you just passing by indifferently? It appears that you have no compassion within you. You should at least have enquired of me, 'You have this bundle next to you, and you are sitting down. Why are you just sitting?'Ají Miají, come here. Mullájí, come here. This bundle is very heavy. I can carry it on my head, but lifting it up is very difficult. I did not realise how heavy it was. Carrying it on my head is also difficult. Just see how old I am and what I am capable of? You are young, má-shá-Alláh, and at your age you have greater capabilities. You are able to lift it and carry it for me, for it appears very difficult for me to carry it on my head. How nice would it not be if you could carry it on your head for me and take it to my house."

So, in appearance - externally, súratan -, this would be disgraceful for you to do so. Is that not so? However, this act would be an honourable act in the eyes of others. Do you understand? In reality, it is not disgraceful. It is only so in appearance. If one has even a little trace of takabbur, one will not tolerate the apparent disgrace.

And if one possesses tawádhu haqíqatan, then this apparent humiliation will be adopted.

You have learnt it off, and even taught it to others, the Hadíth Sharíf that states:

لا ينبغي للمؤمن أن يذل نفسه

It is not the shán of the mu'min to disgrace himself.

Yes, you have learnt it off, and even taught it to others, but you have not recognised the appropriate occasion. You have not recognised the appropriate situation. You considered the situation presenting itself to be that of humiliation: "Me! Carry that bundle on my head? What if I meet my friends and acquaintances, what looks will they not give me? And the Hadíth Sharíf clearly states that one should save oneself from situations of disgrace, so how can I tolerate such a humiliating position?"

Initially, being an 'álim, you already took offence at being called "Miají" and "Mullájí". You forgot that a long time ago, all the great, very great, personalities were called "Mullájí". For example: Mullá Jívan, who was a great 'álim, the ustádh of Hadhrat Alamgír (RA). Mullá Jámí, whose kitáb, the shareh of "Káfí", you have studied. Such great personalities were called "Mullá". But nowadays, being addressed by the term "Mullá" is not tolerated. Why is this term not tolerated? The reason is that the term "Mullá" has taken on another meaning - it is considered to be an undignified term in the eyes of people, an insulting term. Yet, there was an age when this term was used commonly for great, great ulemá. This term is now applied to the mu'ezzin of the masjid or for those who are very low in the social

scale. This term has become thus decayed. However, one has to recognise who the person who is using this term. If it is an ordinary, unsophisticated person, a peasant from the farmlands, then his using the term "Mullájí" should not be offensive.

A qissah:

Hadhratwálá (RA) was standing in front of the courtyard, under the covered area. A person came up to him, made salám and musáfahah. Hadhratwálá (RA) asked, "From where have you come?" He replied, "I have come from Pánípat." "What have you come for?" He took Hadhratwálá's name, saying simply, "I have come to see Ashraf Alí."

One often sees in books that the author's name is written without any titles, simply Ashraf Ali, without adding "Sáhib". Hadhratwálá (RA) said, "I am Ashraf Alí - people call me Ashraf Alí."

Can you hear me?

The person from Pánípat said, "Oh no. It's not you." He addressed Hadhratwálá (RA) with the informal "tu" and not the more respectful word, "áp", never mind saying even respectfully "Hadhrat". Hadhratwálá (RA) said, "And why not?" He repeated, "No, it's not you." Hadhratwálá (RA) asked, "How do you know that I am not, when I am telling you I am Ashraf Ali?" He said, "He is very handsome." Hadhratwálá (RA) said, "How do you know this?" He said, "He had once come to Pánípat to give a lecture. I saw him - he was very handsome."Hadhratwálá (RA) asked, "And how long ago was that?" The person from Pánípat mentioned that it was something like twenty or thirty years ago! "That many years ago, that is when

I saw him." Hadhratwálá (RA), "At that time I was in my youth. Now I am gone old. Where will you still find the same handsomeness?" The Pánípatí responded, "Not so. You are telling lies. You are not Ashraf Alí!" There was a Mauláná Sáhib from Keráná sitting nearby. He had a very white complexion and his beard was not gone very white as yet. Hadhratwálá (RA) said, "Very well. Then it must be that person." The Pánípatí turned around and looked at him. "No, he is too white. It is not him either." Hadhratwálá (RA) said, "It is not him and it is not me. Fine, then go and ask somebody."

At that time there were some building operations taking place and there were some workers around. This person went to them. Whoever he asked, gave the same reply, "That is the person whom you are enquiring about. He is the one."

Finally, he was convinced, seeing that everybody was giving the same reply. He came running back and was about to fall at the feet of Hadhratwálá (RA), who grabbed hold of him, preventing him from doing so. "Oh, oh, what are you doing?" The Pánípatí said, "It is you! Forgive me my mistake." Hadhratwálá (RA) said, "Nothing to worry about. It is a question of non-recognition. My heart is happy. Now tell me: why did you come?" He said, "I was busy with my work, when the thought of you came to me, and my heart told me to go and see you. So I left and came here. I came just to see you again." Hadhratwálá (RA) said, "Is there some work you have to do here then?" He replied, "I have not come for any work. I came to see you. My heart had muhabbat for you and the urge was there to see you. Now that I have seen you, I am going back home. Assalámo-alaikum." He left.

Now, the words with which he addressed Hadhratwálá (RA) and calling a liar on top of it, would appear to be slanderous, you will agree. In appearance it was slanderous, but not so in reality (haqíqatan). Hadhratwálá (RA) recognised the nature of the person presenting himself. He, thus, tolerated his manner of speaking, and he was not upset in the least. Was he offended? Not at all. To the contrary, he was happy. The manner in which some people use the formal "Hadhrat", is like the piercing of an arrow! Whereas the use of the informal "tu" by others causes a glitter to enter the heart, and makes a person happy. In such instances, the word "Hadhrat" is a cause for disgrace and the word "tu" is a cause for honour.

Do you see what is tawádhu and what is takabbur, what is light and what is darkness?

These are principles that are being enunciated. The ramifications you can work out when the occasions arise. However, the task of making deductions is not for everybody. Whosoever has developed within himself correct capabilities of deduction, will be able to do this. His deductions will be correct. As I have mentioned earlier, only that person who has developed tawádhu haqíqí embedded in his heart, with no iota of takabbur remaining in him, may resort to takabbur súratin. That person who has not developed "maleke-izále razílah" (permanent eradication of the akhláqe-razílah) and imbued himself with "maleke-tawádhue haqíqí" (permanent true humility) is not permitted to adopt takabbur súratin.

Another Qissah:

Hadhratwálá (RA) mentioned the following incident:

There was a Mauláná from Delhi. His name was Mauláná Abdur-Rabb Sáhib. You may have heard of the well-known "Madrasah Abdur-Rabb" in Delhi, named after him. Now, Mauláná Abdur-Rabb Sáhib was a guest of a nobleman, a Nawábsáhib, in Mírath. On his way back from Mírath on the way to Delhi, he stopped over in Deoband. The ulemá came to meet him and he related to them what had happened to him while he was a guest at the nobleman's mansion in Mírath.

"I had gone to Mírath, where I was a guest of such-and-such a ra'ís, and an incident took place there involving me. What happened? Well, in the middle of the night, out of the blue, for some unknown reason, I had a tremendous urge to answer the call of nature. I got out of bed and proceeded to the toilet. Now, I did not know that the toilet for guests and others was separate and that the Nawábsáhib had a special toilet reserved for his personal use. The toilet that I entered happened to be the special one reserved for the Nawábsáhib! When I came out of this toilet, it so happened that the Nawábsáhib's security guard happened to be passing by on his security round. He barked at me with harshness, in a reprimanding tone, ‘Who are you?' I quickly thought to myself, ‘Abdur-Rabb, if you were to adopt the humility of the ulemá of Deoband at this point in time, you will suffer such a beating that you will not be able to stand up after that!' I told myself, ‘It is not appropriate to adopt the posture of humility of the ulemá of Deoband at this moment.' So, I barked back at him, ‘Who are you shouting at? Don't you know who I am? I am Hadhrat Mauláná Abdur-Rabb Sáhib of Delhi!' My tone was such that he was visibly shaken, for it appeared that I was a special guest of the Nawábsáhib! The guard, completely cowed, immediately started apologising, ‘Huzúr, I ask to be

forgiven!' I stuck to my role: 'Asking for forgiveness are you?' 'Huzúr, I did not recognise you.' 'Did not recognise me...? Wait till morning comes...!' 'Huzúr, do not report me to the Nawábsáhib! He will dismiss me. I have a wife and children to support. I will become poverty-stricken! For the sake of Alláh Ta'álá, forgive me!' The poor chap was truly humbled. When I saw that he was completely subdued, I said, 'Fine. Very well. I forgive you. You can go. I will not say anything.' I forgave him."

Hadhratwálá (RA) said that when he had said this, a smile had come to his lips. He had continued, "That was not an occasion for displaying tawádhu. It was an occasion for displaying apparent, outward, súrí takabbur. Or else I would have been beaten so severely that my life would have been at stake! That is why I adopted apparent, súrí takabbur on that occasion to avoid difficulty and disgrace befalling me."

Have you some idea now? He had tawádhu haqíqí and there was no trace of takabbur in him. However, that was an occasion of adopting súrí takabbur and not displaying his normal humility. Also, from his statement, "It was not appropriate to adopt the posture of humility of the ulemá of Deoband..." one can assess that the ulemá of Deoband had within them the highest degree of tawádhu in their temperaments in that age.

Another Qissah:

Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul Hasan Sáhib was somebody with great tawádhu. Once there was a jalsah of a madrasah in Kánpúr. Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul Hasan Sáhib, who was known as Sheikul Hind, was also a guest.

Incidentally, Hadhratwálá (RA) used to be upset at this title, and used to comment, "Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul Hasan Sáhib was at that level of being Sheikhul-álam, not merely of the subcontinent of India (Hind). I am amazed that he is referred to as Sheikhul-Hind." Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul Hasan Sáhib was the tutor of Hadhratwálá (RA). He was not the sadr-mudarris at that time - Mauláná Yáqúb Sáhib was the sadr- mudarris.

To continue: There was an 'álim from Alígarh, Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib. He was a great scholar and he excelled especially in the science of mathematics. Abdul-Haqq Khairábádí, was a famous Logician and Philosopher. In his era Mauláná Abdul-Haqq Khairábádí used to say, "In the whole of Hindustán, there are only two and a half 'álims." He counted himself as one, his father as one and Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib of Alígarh, as half an 'álim. In his opinion the ulemá of Deoband were completely excluded! The reality was that the ulemá of Deoband - speaking of their whole academic lifestyles - were an embodiment of Fiqah and Hadíth. They glittered in these fields. They had great expertise in the field of Logic, but they did not immerse themselves completely in this field. Based on this Mauláná Abdul-Haqq Khairábádí held the view that the ulemá of Deoband had no special affinity for the science of Logic. On the other hand, he considered himself to be uniquely eminent in this field.

Never mind the ulemá of Deoband, even Mauláná Ismá'íl Shahíd (RA), nephew of Sháh Abdul-Azíz (RA), whose era had just passed, was not given any consideration.

Another Qissah:

Hadhratwálá (RA) related another incident:

Mauláná Abdul-Haqq Khairábádí sent an 'álim with some questions pertaining to Logic, with the instructions, "Go to Mauláná Ismá'íl Sáhib and have him solve them."

Now, Sháh Ismá'íl Shahíd (RA) was pre-occupied with the concept of jihád. In order to wage jihád, several forms of training are necessary. One does not know what situations one may come across during jihád at the practical level. So, Sháh Ismá'íl Shahíd (RA) used to walk barefoot on the stone-laid courtyard of the Jámi'ah Masjid in Delhi in the heat of summer. The reason was to be prepared for the vicissitudes to be found on the battlefield. What if one had no shoes, how would one fare? He also trained himself to be a good swimmer: he used to go to swim in the River Jamná, which flows through the one end of Delhi. After Asr he used to swim from one bank to the other and back.

It is important to be acquainted with the histories of our Akábir. What type of people were they? Those who have passed on before us were such that they were people without match!

Mauláná Ismá'íl Shahíd (RA) was also a Háfizul-Qur'án. His practice was that, when he started his swim in the River Jamná, he would start reciting the Qur'án Sharíf. Reciting all the way while swimming from the one bank to the other and then back in the direction of Delhi, he used to make a khatam of the Qur'án Sharíf! He would then proceed to the Jámi'ah Masjid to perform his Maghrib namáz with jamá'at. This was his practice with regard to swimming.

So, at the time that he went into the River Jamná for his normal swim, the 'álim sent by Mauláná Abdul-Haqq Khairábádí, arrived with the questions. He addressed Mauláná Ismá'íl Shahíd (RA), "I have been sent by Mauláná Abdul-Haqq Khairábádí Sáhib. He has some questions on Logic for you to solve." Mauláná Ismá'íl Shahíd (RA) said, "You can carry on asking the questions and I will give my replies. You write down them as I speak." The 'álim did as instructed and put forward the questions, while Mauláná Ismá'íl Shahíd (RA) gave his replies on the turn. So, while swimming along the bank of the river, Mauláná Ismá'íl Shahíd (RA) gave his replies to all the questions.

This was the person whom Mauláná Abdul-Haqq Khairábádí thought had no inkling of the science of Logic! Can you gauge his calibre? Do you see the calibre of our Akábir, of the lineage and nisbat of Sháh Walí-ulláh (RA). The ulemá Akábir of Deoband have their academic lineage from Sháh Walí-ulláh (RA). The publishing and propagation, especially of fiqah and Hadíth Sharíf, have come down from Sháh Walí-ulláh (RA).

Let us now continue with the previous qissah: The Jalsah in Kánpúr was taking place. Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib had also been invited but had not arrived as yet. The turn of Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul Hasan Sáhib came to deliver his lecture. During the course of his lecture, there was a slight commotion. Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib had arrived. People turned around to look to see who had come. He was well known, and a whisper went about, "Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib has arrived! Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib has arrived!" Noting the slight commotion Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul Hasan Sáhib also looked up. When his gaze fell on Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib, he abruptly ended his talk.

Are you listening?

Having rounded up his sentence in a few words, he finished off. Some of his students from the Dárul-Ulúm who had gone with him to the Jalsah, as happens that a sheikh will take some of his muríds with him, felt very disappointed at this. It was not the habit of Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul Hasan Sáhib to deliver lectures. However, on this occasion he had made an exception, and his talk was full of amazing proofs, arguments and counter-arguments. The students felt very heart sore. They were aware that Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib Alígarhí did not have a high opinion of the ulemá of Deoband. He had no real respect for them in his heart. So, the students were naturally very disappointed and also very puzzled, as this was an occasion to demonstrate the capabilities of the ulema' of Deoband.

When Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul Hasan Sáhib came to meet them, greetings took place and after the scheduled proceedings of the Jalsah were attended to, they

then retired to the places allocated to them. Some of the students asked Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul Hasan Sáhib, "Hadhrat, what did you do? This was the ideal opportunity to have continued your lecture. Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib would have come to realise that the ulemá of Deoband were not devoid of providing proofs arguments and counter-arguments in the science of Logic. He would have heard your lecture with his own ears, but Hadhrat, you kept quiet." Hadhratwálá (RA) went on to say that

Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul Hasan Sáhib said, "Very true. This very thought that you are expressing, came to me as well..."

Are you all listening?

"Yes, this very thought that you are expressing, came to me as well and I thought to myself, 'If I were now to continue with my lecture it would be to show off my greatness, a manifestation of pride and conceit. It will not be for the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá or for the Díní benefit of the listeners. It would be for myself, and not for the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá (radhá-e-iláhí).' So, I kept quiet."

Is my voice reaching you? Do you see the qualities of our Akábir?

In other words, there is no room for waswasah. No room is left for such a thought, when it comes to mind, and then to keep it in one's mind.

Do you understand?

Takabbur, riyá and ujub: these are controlled in such a manner that not even a single waswasah is allowed to intrude. Do you see the reality of tawádhu? Do you see the extinction of takabbur? Have you pondered over it?

Light and darkness. Tawádhu is light and takabbur is darkness. Tawádhu haqíqí and takabbur haqíqí, and tawádhu súrí and takabbur súrí, are not permissible to be utilised by everybody. This is for certain individuals who have become like these individuals. Which type of individuals? These are those who have haqíqí nisbat ma-Alláh. So, who are these who have haqíqí nisbat ma-Alláh? These are those who have attained a nafs that is mut-ma'inna. Again: Who are these? These are those with nafse-mut-ma'inna. In the Qur'án Sharíf the nafs is mentioned as one but can exist three states. I had spoken on this previously. (Kindly refer to "For Friends" Booklet Number Seven).

The Nafse-Mutma'innah

One state is Nafse-ammárah. The Qur'án Sharíf mentions this:

إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ

The nafs enjoineth unto evil (12:.53)

Its basic component, its innate disposition, is to commit evil. This statement of Hadhrat Yusuf (RA) has mentioned in the Qur'án Sharíf by Alláh Ta'álá. Was the Azíz's wife not running after him and did he not flee from her to save his life? This was in the royal palace. Are you listening attentively to my words? You are?

Excellent! There are lessons in these. With the tawfíq of Alláh Ta'álá, there are lessons to be learnt in all these.

A Qissah:

Incidentally, something else comes to mind. Hadhratwálá (RA) related this to us. You find those with money, in search of comfort and pleasure, will have servants - young boys, girls and women - to do all their work for them: to cook and clean, to make up the beds, and so forth. There are many among these who are big gossipers, carrying tales from here to there and from there to here. Also, they are full of many titillating, alluring and provocative stories.

A youth, very handsome, was passing by. In a mansion along the way there lived a young lady. She was of a good, well-to-do home. It so happened that she was alone at home - her parents had gone somewhere in the neighbourhood for some necessary work. Standing at the entrance of the mansion was one of these mischievous maids. On seeing the handsome youth approaching, she quickly went inside and instigated the young lady of the house. "There is such a marvelous and handsome youth outside!" "Go quickly, and call him," the young lady responded. He was called on the pretext that the young lady in the mansion was ill. "Please make dam on her. You appear to be a durwesh from your appearance." He went in, unsuspectingly. Some people are innocent and trusting. (Kindly refer to "For Friends" Booklet Number seven).

The young lady addressed him, "Come in, come in. My illness is such that I need you to fulfil my desires

The door behind him had been locked. He became terrified. What to do? He suddenly clutched his stomach. He grimaced and said, "Ofo! My stomack has a severe cramp! Instruct your bandi to place some water for me in the toilet".

In those days the toilets had no running sewerage like we like we have these days. Water had to be taken specifically to the toilet for istinja, and the night-soil was removed by special groups of cleaners.

The water was placed in the toilet for him and he went out. One does not know whether there was some there was some excreta lying there or he had a bowel action, but, in any case, he took the faeces and smeared some on his face, some on his hands and some on his clothes. With this the flies also started swarming around him. In this amazing condition, he re-entered the bedroom. The young lady saw him and started screaming at the bándí, "A mad man! What madman did you bring here? Get out! Get him out from here!" The bándí opened the door and let him out.

You understood the strategy the youth used to save himself? On the other hand, take our youth, our young men: should they see some beautiful girl, they will try different schemes to meet her. Whereas, in the incident just mentioned, without wanting to, he had a beautiful lady within his reach, but he devised a scheme to escape her clutches. He was at the stage of Nafse-mut-ma'innah.

Do you now recognise this phase of the nafs, Nafse-mut-ma'innah, or not yet? This is what it means to have haqíqí nisbat ma-Alláh. Those who are older will relate these incidents to the younger people, to the tálib, from person to person - from Hadhratwálá (RA) to me and then from me to you. These are not related without

real reasons. To the tálibe-tazkiyah, to the person in the Khánqah, to the sincere and truthful searcher, these have lessons in them.

"Ofo! This is an amazing effect of having a Nafse-mut-ma'innah." Faeces - something which is impure (ná-pák) - was taken in his bare hands and smeared on his face and arms, and on his clothes and then he presented himself to her. She was revolted by the sight and the smell of him and got rid of him, screaming, "A mad man! What madman did you bring here? Get out! Get him out from here!" He went home, changed his soiled clothes and put on clean clothes. Is my voice reaching you?

This same youth was once going somewhere, sometime before the above incident took place. Along the way he had come across Shaitán, who was carrying a net with him. This person had addressed Shaitán, saying, "Prepare a net for me also. The net you are carrying looks beautiful." Shaitán had replied, "Very well. I shall see to it some time."

Now, after the above incident, the youth again met Shaitán along the way and said, "Where is my net? I had asked you to prepare one for me also." Shaitán replied, "Ari yár! I had prepared a net for you! However, you became insane!"

It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf:

النســـاء حبالـــة الشـــياطين

Women are the nets (snares) of Shaitán.

So, Shaitán said that he had prepared such a net for him, but instead of falling into his net, he resorted to the ploy of appearing insane. How did he resort to this scheme of appearing mad? It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf:

لا يؤمن أحدكم حتى أن يقال له انه لمجنون

This means: Just see, O you Mu'mins, you will not be kámil (perfect) Mu'mins until those who see you do not tell you that you are mad, completely mad. Did the kuffár and mushrikín not tell Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that he was mad? Yes, they did! Nowadays, do not the general populace, the intellectuals, the politicians and national leaders, say, "How much knowledge do the ulemá have? What do the ulemá know? Just see from where to where has the world not progressed! From where to where has the world not advanced! What do these ulemá know? This is the age of progress. Man has reached the moon already. What do the ulemá know? Ulemá have no knowledge of today's world."

Status of the Ulema' and Politics

This is the label the ulemá have been given in this age, from the intellectuals, from the politicians, from the leaders of the nation. Yet, what did my Hadhrat say? Was he not in the final age and most recent period? What should I say? In his age, my Hadhrat was the essence, the sum total and a faultless jewel of all the Auliyá-Alláh, ulemá and pious predecessors.

I have heard with my own ears, in the very special majlis that used to take place in the mornings, Hadhrat saying... What did he say? He said, "Whatever ahwál

(spiritual states) that had been experienced by the preceding Auliyá-Alláh, those very háláts I have also experienced."

And he also said.... What did he say? Well, you have heard of Mansúr of days gone by, the one who had proclaimed "An-al-Haqq!" and who was executed after being found guilty of blasphemy. Hadhratwálá (RA) said, concerning this incident, "Were I present at that time, I would not have allowed Mansúr to be taken to the scaffold to be executed." (The implication of this statement is that Hadhratwálá (RA) would have put forward such proofs to show that his statements did not denote any such meanings as to have a charge of blasphemy being leveled at him and he would have been set free).

I am relating matters that I have heard with my own ears.

To continue: What else did Hadhratwálá (RA) say, in this last era, taking into account all the conditions prevailing at the time? "The politics of this age is different. Our ulemá should avoid getting involved in these politics. Our ulemá will not be able to support and sustain the politics of this age. Let those intellectuals who have come here after having studied in England, (It was the age of the British Empire and England was the centre for secular learning. get involved in politics). Yes, your duties are to mix with them, develop an informality with them and make tablígh to them. Allow them to rule. The nature of politics in this age is such. And the rank that you hold, the duty that you have to carry out is to associate with them and develop an informal relationship with them and make

tablígh to them, so that, in time to come, they come to know the Sharí'ah laws and the politicians come to accept these and act on the Sharí'ah.

Let them study and let them rule. However, tablígh should be made to them. Now, those making tablígh, should they be ordinary people approaching such people? Remember, these are people with status, be it from the point of view of their noble family lineage, or their education, or from being well-bred, or from being cultured. So, should just an ordinary person go and make tablígh amongst them? There was a time when the ulemá also were men of status, being from noble lineage, cultured, well-mannered, having perfection in rhetoric, having perfection in eloquence. These are the ones who should go to them.

Importance of Family Lineage

Just see. Wait and see. See what? It is not a question of being rich or being poor. It is a question of family nobility (khándán). It is not in everybody's nature to follow those of a lower khándán - not everybody has the temperament to incline to those of a lower family lineage. The Ambiyá AS), those who were given nabúwat (prophethood), all came from very, very noble families. They were not from a low lineage. Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was descended from a very noble family from among the Arabs, even though he was raised in poverty. What is so special about family nobility and lineage? Leave aside the present times. This age is full of fitnas (trials/ corruption). Even those from very noble and honourable families, have not remained so. This is the result of television, bringing its tablígh from the west. Otherwise, those who were of great and noble families, were a

category apart. We have seen them, we have met them and we have inter-acted with them. Without being ‘educated', yet they were very highly cultured. They possessed amazing manners. They had amazing etiquettes. If wrong teachings were not imbibed, or if no learning was attained, or if correct learning was pursued, a person became even more cultured.

The ulemá of those days were told by Hadhratwálá, "Let them involve themselves in politics. Let them rule. But you make tablígh amongst them, so that their temperaments turn towards the laws of the Sharí'ah in their national politics and their administration.

As I was saying: My Hadhrat was the essence and sum total of all the ulemá and Auliyá-Alláh.

The Status of 'Ilm

Let us continue: Take 'Ilm, can it tolerate hirs and tama'? Can 'Ilm tolerate greed and avarice?'Ilm: what is meant by this word? Does it refer to secular education or Dín? It refers to Dín and wahí. If this is the case, then can 'Ilm tolerate deception and sycophancy? Can it adopt, on an ikhtiyárí (voluntary) basis, slander and disgrace? Mind you, I am using the word ikhtiyárí. Gair- ikhtiyárí (involuntary) is another matter. I had mentioned previously, if told to carry this big burden home for someone in distress, is it ikhtiyárí or gair-ikhtiyárí? It is gair-ikhtiyárí. Is this disgraceful? This would not be disgraceful.

لا ينبغي للمؤمن أن يذل نفسه

It is far from the dignity of a mu'min that he adopts any activity that will lead to his disgrace in the eyes of people. The word "ay-yuzilla" is used. This refers to ikhtiyárí activity. What is gair-ikhtiyárí is excluded. So, now do you understand the difference?

The talk, in the beginning, was on tawádhu and takabbur; light and darkness. So, a mu'min should not voluntarily adopt from his side such activities that will be disgrace on him in the eyes of the people, that people think him contemptible. Gair-ikhtiyárí is another matter.

A Qissah:

Take the situation with our Mauláná Muzaffar Husain Sáhib. He was a great 'álim, abstinent, muttaqí, highly respected in the community, and who lived in Kándhlá. Mostly, the ulemá of Kándhlá were noblemen. He dressed very plainly and simply. On one occasion he was going somewhere. Co-incidentally, a policeman, having just alighted at the railway station, was going to the police station with his luggage. Seeing this person in his simple attire, he ordered him in commanding tones, "Come here! Carry my luggage! I'm on my way to the police station. Take my luggage there!" Mauláná Muzaffar Husain Sáhib lifted the luggage as ordered, placed it on his head and carried it to the police station. When they reached there, the policeman ordered, "Good. Leave it here!" It so happened that the police superintendent knew Mauláná Muzaffar Husain Sáhib. Understandably upset at the policeman's audaciousness in getting Mauláná to carry his luggage, he stood up and was about to reprimand the policeman, but Mauláná Muzaffar Husain Sáhib

quickly spoke up, "He is weak and tired, and was in need of assistance, so I helped the poor chap carry his luggage. Do not tell him anything!" The superintendent had great respect for Mauláná and said nothing to the policeman.

Do you see? Did he adopt what is ikhtiyárí or gair- ikhtiyárí? He had adopted what was gair-ikhtiyárí. Is there respect in his action or disgrace? Respect, because he was ordered to do so and he did not do so voluntarily. To have acted voluntarily in this way is forbidden.

It is not in the capability of everyone to utilise light and darkness to a degree of fairness and justice; according to the demands of place, person and situation. That is why the muslih, the guide and mentor, fills the ears of the tálibáne-isláh, the tálibáne--tazkiyah, with every type of teaching, and causes these to settle in their hearts, so that they may apply it correctly and act accordingly when the situation demands it.

Do you understand? Until the haqá'iq for differing situations are not brought forth, how is the poor student of tazkiyah to know? The sheikh is not going to remain with you forever. Hadhratwálá used to say that the teachings of the sheikh will remain. The tálibe-sádiq, mukhlis, who listens attentively with correct i'tiqád to every word and allows these words to settle firmly in his heart, will find the teachings of his sheikh with him all the time. The tálib will now develop light in his heart, from adopting taqwá and making an abundance of zikr, and from muráqabát. The foremost is taqwá. An abundance of zikr or muráqabát does not take priority over taqwá. This is termed correct nisbat, correct attachment to Alláh

Ta'álá. Mere muráqabah, without taqwá, is not correct nisbat with Alláh Ta'álá. The first and foremost is taqwá. To embellish this, there is the zikr of Alláh Ta'álá, to embellish this is also the contemplation of Alláh Ta'álá.

There may be roshní, but there is no recognition of a particular item - there may be light, but no item is seen with it. So, will the light enable one to grasp the item which the light was supposed to reveal? The answer is no. That is the position of taqwá.

The qissah of Mauláná Muzaffar Husain Sáhib has been mentioned. Bear it in mind. He had adopted what was gair- ikhtiyárí, in which there is no disgrace. The term "ay-yuzilla" is used. Grammatically, it is not "feil-e-lázmí" (an action that terminates in itself) but "feil-e-tá'diyah"(an action that is continuous).

Istigná and Be-Istigná

(Istigná - Self-reliance, self-determination, autonomy, individualism. Be-istigná is the opposite of istigná).

Those who are from nobility, possess amazing manners and culture. Hadhratwálá narrated an incident concerning istigná and bé-istigná :

There was a prince from Iran who had come to India for a holiday. During his travels he also came into contact with a particular nobleman. The nobleman told him, "Seeing you are here on holiday, this here is my address - should you come my way, please do come and pay me a visit." The prince replied, "Very well. Will do so."

Those who are big-shots in the world, have a habit of being extravagant (isráf). In the context of their status, they tend to be wasteful. For them to recognise an appropriate place, person and occasion is very difficult. It was the same with this prince from Iran. While travelling and spending, his financial condition deteriorated. He reached a situation of impoverishment. Even his clothes, instead of showing his princely status, evidenced his degraded state. While in this condition, he thought of the offer of the nobleman he had met. He still had his address with him. He decided to go and visit him.

When the nobleman saw him in this abject and weak condition, he brazenly recited a couplet in Fársí to the prince:

When the temperament of a lion (being a lion) changes to that of a jackal, he goes begging with his needs to the doors of others.

Having previously seen the prince in his royal splendour and witnessing his poverty now, the nobleman read this couplet. However, after all, the prince was from royalty. Without any hesitation, as his repartee, he also recited a couplet with an air of complete independence and nonchalance.

You have not seen a real lion. What you may have seen is an artificial lion. No matter what the condition of a masculine lion descends to, despite his needs, he still lashes out with his sharp claws!

The prince, having recited this rejoinder, turned around and started walking away. The nobleman realised his indiscretion and error, and apologised profusely, again

and again, but the prince retorted, "You are not worthy of associating with." He left.

From this you will be able to see what istigná is. That prince from Iran was a worldly person. He was not one who possessed 'Ilme-Dín and 'Ilme-wahí. In comparison to the worldly person, one can gauge to what degree of qalbí istigná that person should have in whom the knowledge of Dín has entered and to whom 'Ilme-wahí has reached.

What was the reason that Hadhratwálá related this incident to us? It was to compare the two. In the above incident, was it not a matter of disgrace for the prince to still meet the nobleman after the latter had recited that insulting couplet? Yes, it would have been dishonourable for him still to meet him. So, he did not meet him.

So, what did Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) state to the general mu'min community? Remember that whatever Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) stated was, in actual fact, what Alláh Ta'álá wanted him to say.

لا ينبغي للمؤمن أن يذل نفسه

What about that person, besides being from among the general mu'minín, is also an 'álim, what then? And, being a mu'min and an 'álim, he is also a sáhib-e-tazkiyah, a sáhib-e-tarbiyet, what then? What degree of istigná must he not have! At times there is some admixture, some contamination occurring in istigná and istikbár (pride/conceit). Istigná is light (roshní). Istikbár is darkness (indherá). To be able to recognise the admixture is not everybody's work. Yes, with the taufíq of Alláh

Ta'álá, that person will be able to do it, who is a sáhib-e-tazkiyah, sádiq, mukhlis, with his gaze on the hereafter, with a nafs that is kept at the level of mutma'innah, one who can recognise the difference between light and darkness, and one who is able to act on adl and insáf.

At times, another person may come forward with injustice and treat him unjustly, but this tálib-e-tazkiyah will not allow the reigns of adl to slip from his hands. May Alláh Ta'álá make it that we can understand! This is what is termed tazkiyah; this is what is called taríqat and sulúk. This is that Sharí'ah that will not be manifested as Sharí'ah without husne sulúk.

Repetition Is Beneficial

Just see: Hadhrat Alí (RA) had thrown the káfir enemy on the ground and was saddled on his chest, about to slay him...

An incident may be repeated several times in order that a certain concept settles down firmly in the heart of the tálibáne-tazkiyah, so that on the right occasion, without making an effort at remembering and without having to stop to think of the solution, the correct reaction springs up spontaneously in his mind and he acts accordingly. In the Qur'án Sharíf as well, one finds certain incidents narrated at several different places, often with a slightly different perspective, so that Alláh Ta'álá is telling us, "The related lessons may be settled firmly in the hearts of My mu'min bandah, and that My dispensation comes to be known - what is My methodology (ádatulláh) - when, with whom and in what manner." Similarly, the muslih - the guide - will relate an incident several times on different occasions and

in different majális. A person may think, "I have heard this before, many times." Yes, you may have heard it before, but has it settled in your heart? Has the lesson been learnt? Have you acted accordingly when the situation presented itself before you? Have you attained that firmness?

A Qissah:

We heard Hadhratwálá relate this incident many times, and also read it for it has also been published as well. Anyhow, let us continue: Sitting on the káfir's chest, his sword drawn, Hadhrat Alí (RA) was ready to execute the káfir. At that crucial moment the káfir spat into his face. Hadhrat Alí (RA) immediately got off his chest. Take into account that the person was a káfir, an enemy combatant, and one who was overpowered and defencless. He still had the gall to insult Hadhrat Alí (RA) by spitting into his face! Was this not denigratory? The status of Hadhrat Alí (RA) should also be considered: he came from a very noble family, one whose ímán was of the highest order, one who had an honoured position among the Sahábah (RA) and closeness to Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam); one who had been given the glad tidings of Jannat. Truly, he was of a very elevated status.

Those who are truly elevated, who are considered to be important, have the highest degree of abdiyet; they have the highest degree of humility, even though they may be wearing clothes of royalty. Mullá Jámí (RA) was a great 'álim. You may have studied his kitáb "Sháreh Jámí", which is prescribed in the Dárul-Ulúm...

Turning to a Sheikh

Before proceeding, let me mention something else: Towards the end, some ulemá develop some perception with regard to tazkiyah. When this realisation comes, they do not ignore it, but place their full attention and concentration on it. I have seen this with my own eyes. Mauláná Rasúlkhán Sáhib was a very amazing and accomplished mudarris at the Dárul-Ulúm, excelling in Philosophy and Logic. I studied the kitáb "Qází" under him.

A Qissah:

Once, a person from Khairábád attended his class whilst he was teaching the kitáb "Qází". We had mentioned previously Mauláná Khairábádí Sáhib, who considered himself unique in the field of Logic and Philosophy. Well, this student was from the same place. He had come to visit another student here. Seeing that the lesson was still on, he went to sit among the students of the class. Mauláná Rasúlkhán Sáhib did not notice his arrival or his presence. He had the habit of looking down and not looking right or left while he gave his lesson. He used to lean his back against the wall and give his lesson in this manner. When the lesson came to an end, the Khairábádí student raised a criticism of a particular point. Mauláná Rasúlkhán Sáhib gave his reply. On this, the Khairábádí student raised another criticism. Mauláná Rasúlkhán Sáhib replied to this. Again, the Khairábádí student raised another objection on this reply.

O students, are you listening? An ustádh will recognise the quality of his students and tailor his talks at their level. He explains the subjects of the kitábs accordingly. They sit in front of him daily and he comes to recognise their potentials. However,

here was a student who appeared to be stubborn and mad, raising one needless objection after another. So, Mauláná Rasúlkhán Sáhib, in reply to the objection, then delivered a power-packed lecture, giving proofs, references and detailed explanations. At the end of this powerful exposition, he kept silent. There was now no more room for any objections or criticisms, and none came forth!

Mauláná Rasúlkhán Sáhib had the habit of using three phrases and these were, "Himár (donkey). Buze-akhfash (dunce). Kamarband ho-gyá dilá? (i.e. Has the steam being knocked out of you?)." These remarks were made in affection, according to the quality of the student concerned. However, on this occasion he did not know that there was a visitor present, but when he saw that there were no further objections being raised, addressing the questioner, he said, "Himár, Buze-akhfash, Kamarband ho-gyá dilá? Why do you not speak now?" The questioner was silenced

Do you see? Our ulemá were not in any way inferior to the Khairábádíes. Our Akábir ulemá were a match for the Khairábádíes, who were boastful of their knowledge of Philosophy and Logic.

Coming to the point I wish to make that, towards the latter period of his life, Mauláná Rasúlkhán Sáhib also turned towards Tasawwuf and sulúk. He established an isláhí contact with Hadhratwálá and was given khiláfat - mujáze-bai't - as well. Another such person was Mauláná Abdur-Rahmán Sáhib Kemalpúrí, of Mazáharul-Ulúm, highly qualified in Philosophy and Logic, Hadíth and Fiqh. He also developed this realisation towards the end and became bai't to

Hadhratwálá. He also became mujáze-bai't. These individuals developed the realisation of the importance of Tasawwuf and sulúk towards the latter part of their lives.

A Qissah:

We were going to speak about Mullá Jámí before we digressed. His qissah came to mind when I spoke about royalty. He had also developed this yearning in his heart. He went to go and meet a buzurg.

Now, remember that abdiyet is an inner state. What we had mentioned with regard to the reality of humility and the difference between istigná and istikbár (Istikbár: pride/conceit).

In the past the Akábir of the Naqshbandí silsilah used to live with much pomp and glory. The Chistiyah did not adopt this method. Although we are connected to all the four silsilahs, the Chistiyah silsilah is predominant in our approach.

Before Mullá Jámí could enter to meet the buzurg, he saw that there was a doorman at the entrance. He had to obtain permission from the doorman in order to enter. Having obtained this permission, Mullá Jámí went forward and shifted the curtain in the doorway. As he lifted the curtain his gaze fell on the furnishings inside: luxurious carpets were on the floor, large, soft pillows against the wall, with the buzurg sitting with the pomp of royalty. On seeing all this luxury, Mullá Jámí recited a line of poetry:

The Ahlullah, those who are wásil-bil-Haqq, cannot be infatuated by the Dunyá.

Having recited this, he left and went to stay at the masjid.

At night he had a dream in which some person from the rijále-gaib (Rijále-gaib: a person from the Unseen; a person that Alláh Ta'álá sends to assist the Ahlulláh), came to him. Mullá Jámí asked him, "I want to travel the road to Alláh Ta'álá. Could you show me the way?" This person answered, "You had the road, but you left it." Mullá Jámí's eyes opened. He was now very perplexed. What to do now? He dosed off again and saw another dream: It was the Day of Hashr (Judgement Day) and accounts were being taken. Mullá Jámí saw himself there as well. Some people came to him, demanding money owed to them by Mullá Jámí. He was greatly agitated, as he had no money with him. He saw a sedan-chair coming with somebody sitting in it. There was an attendant with this person. The sedan-chair was placed on the ground and the attendant came to Mullá Jámí with the good news that the sheikh had offered to settle his debts from the money that the sheikh had kept there. The money was handed over and the debts settled. Mullá Jámí was left off the hook. Curious to know who the generous person was, Mullá Jámí approached the sedan-chair. Much to his surprise, he recognised the person as being the same buzurg that he had gone to see that day! His eyes opened. He was now more perplexed than ever!

The night passed and it was the time of dawn. At the time of Fajr he saw the sheikh enter the masjid for salát. The opportunity to ask his forgiveness had presented itself. He rushed forward, but as he was about to fall at the sheikh's feet, the sheikh stopped him. "No. No. It is not necessary. However, that line that you read: yesterday you recited it for your own pleasure. Today, my desire is that you recite

it again, but for my pleasure." Mullá Jámí said, "It was my error, my fault. I ask to be forgiven." The sheikh said, "I am quite serious: yesterday you recited for your own happiness; today recite it to make me happy." Mullá Jámí recited the same line again:

The Ahlulláh, those who are wásil-bil-Haqq, cannot be infatuated by the Dunyá.

The sheikh immediately added his own line to it:

If one who is a real, haqíqí Mehbúb of Alláh Ta'álá, keeps dunyá as a friend, he does it for the sake of a friend.

The one line of poetry became a couplet. The friend had asked and he had a right over one, so as per the order of Alláh Ta'álá, it was used for the friend. It was not used for oneself, not for elevating one's prestige, not for promoting one's status and grandeur, not for the sake of hubbe-jáh, not for the sake of hubbe-mál. It was used only for hubbe-iláhí.

As I had said: towards the end many come to realise the importance of sulúk. So was it with Mullá Jámí. He also became aware of the need of having a sheikh. He became bai't to the buzurg.

The Responsibilities of a Sheikh

Remember that istigná is one thing and istikbár is another. To differentiate between the two is not within the capabilities of everyone. The muslih - that person whom you refer to as the sheikh - will discuss various topics in a majlis. The qualities of the tálib will determine the degree of 'Ilm that he will attain and the degree of

perception that he will develop. Just as the muslih will convey correct practice, so will he convey correct Díní ta'lím.

Now, take this letter that I have received, being kept in front of you. The sender has written: "This is my name. I am a student at a Dárul-Ulúm, studying such-and-such specialist kitábs." Where he has written "Dárul-Ulúm", I have drawn a line and written, "Dárul-Ulúm is a general term. Nowadays, the madrasah is called a Dárul-Ulúm, but this is a general term applicable to all such institutes. Why did you not add a specific name to it, so that one may recognise which Dárul-Ulúm you are attending?" This has been done to correct his statement. A Dárul-Ulúm is a general, generic term for such institutions, and not specific to a particular one.

You would have studied Logic, in which these issues are explained. For example: man is an animal, falling into the category (genus) common for all animals. The sub-group (species) that he falls under is that of "nátiq" (one who speaks). Until this sub-group is not mentioned, he will be considered to be just a part of the animal kingdom.

So, this student wrote "Dárul-Ulúm", but he did not mention the sub-group, the specific institution. I am aware that, generally, when we refer to "Dárul-Ulúm" over here, we are referring to the Dárul-Ulúm in Deoband. However, what has happened now recently? Now there are two Dárul-Ulúms in Deoband, one being the "Qadím" (Old) and the other being the "Jadíd" (New). The latter is attached to the Jáme Masjid (Subsequently, this Dárul-Ulúm (Jadíd) moved to its own, separate premises), which is waqf, the other being gair-waqf. I am not sure what

term is used to describe it. So, which Dárul-Ulúm is he studying at - the Qadím or the Jadíd? I also realised that he was most probably referring to the Dárul-Ulúm Qadím. However, he was being corrected on this issue: a line was drawn at that point and the question posed as to why did he not specify the Dárul-Ulúm. How am I to know which Dárul-Ulúm he was at if he did not specify as much?

So, that person who is a sheikh will correct the statements of his muríds, just as he corrects their actions. Why did he write in those terms? Why did he speak in that manner? Also, why did he sit in that manner? Sitting here, why is he looking elsewhere? Is this correct talab - is this a sign of questing?

The sheikh relates incidences and anecdotes as well - the context and effects of these are also related, in order that the tálibán-e-tazkiyah may develop discernment and a deep understanding of Dín, with its detailed ramifications and differences of opinions.

Every hirs is not harám. Every tamá' is not harám. Every takabbur is not harám. Every istigná is not permissible. One should be able to discern the correct viewpoint in differences of opinion. This is not easy and simple - it is not an insignificant quality. One needs to have lengthy sohbat to develop this. One needs to listen with great attention and thoughtfulness.

It is a well-known practice coming down from the mashá'ikh, that there is not just a single specific topic discussed in a majlis, as in a lecture, but the topics discussed are general, varied and many. These are presented with authentic narrations and rational proofs.

I had said something earlier on, before the majlis had commenced: The lights were switched on. There was enough light. The doors were then opened and more light came in - the intensity of the light increased. What did I then say? I said, "Put the lights off." Was this non-beneficial speech? What amazing people, what amazing friendship, what an amazing demonstration of faith and confidence, that this statement of mine is considered to be frivolous, to be lá-yání, to be laghu to be useless!

Laghu - Absurd/ Nonsensical

The meaning of the word "laghu" is "absurd/ nonsensical".

This word is used in the Qur'án Sharíf. See in the twenty-fifth surah. Mentioning several of the noble qualities of the believers, Alláh Ta'álá goes on to state that one of the qualities of the mu'min is that:

لاَ يَشْهَدُونَ الزُّورَ وَالَّذِينَ

The translation of this áyet is that the shán - the nobility and dignified status - of the believers is that they do not sit where nonsensical activities are taking place. The word that is used is "lá-yash-hadúna" - "they do not witness". The word "lá-yasma-úna" - "they do not listen" - is not used. The Word of Alláh Ta'álá is pure and full of depth and inner meaning. Scholarly linguists have thrown down their arms in the face of it. To continue: It is also not stated, "lá-yaj-lisúna" - "they do not sit" - but it is said, "lá yash-hadúna" - "they do not witness". Also, the word "laghu" is not used, but the word "zúr" - "lies/ falsehood" - is used. It is not in the shán of a mu'min is that he should sit in stupid and unintelligent gatherings. The

meaning then would be that those gatherings where the conversation is non-beneficial, useless and inappropriate, and where there is no dafa'mazarrat (warding off harm), a gathering where those present speak about irrelevant matters, are avoided by the mu'min.

Another way of putting it is thus: He does not grant an opportunity to others to witness his stupidity by them observing his actions. If he were to sit in such gatherings, his action would be proof of his stupidity and being unintelligent! Those with knowledge have clearly understood that, by his action and by his speech, he is giving a clear indication of his idiocy, his stupidity. Those with knowledge have understood very well!

Do you understand?

Ímán also has some rank and status, and those with ímán - the mu'minín - will also enjoy some rank and status. So, that person who has this rank and status should live up to that position, not shift away from it. So, we should assess ourselves: being mu'min and also of the ahle-'Ilm, have we shifted away from that rank or not? Alláh Ta'álá is saying it: By your actions and your speech, why are you giving proof of your idiocy and stupidity? Are you not ashamed? Have you no sense of shame? Have you no modesty in you? Why are you sitting in such venues? Why are you sitting amongst such people? Why are you involved in such activities? And, mind you, you being of the ahle-'Ilm! Why are you involved in the sports of the English, being students of wahí?

It is Alláh Ta'álá Who is stating that this is not in keeping with the shán of the mu'min. And what if that mu'min is an 'álim, and what if that 'álim, in addition, is a tálib in sulúk? Has the rank and status not increased? It has! That is why Alláh Ta'álá has stated further on: Never mind not sitting there, never mind not providing proof of one being an idiot and being stupid, when his route unavoidably passes by them and he passes by incidentally by such stupid people, his shán is such that he pays no attention to them and he passes by with the greatest of dignity, in such a way that there is not the slightest thought of his own greatness or pride or arrogance; and there is absolutely no contempt for those involved in those nonsensical activities.

و إذا مروا باللغو مروا كراما

This is a continuation of the áyet quoted above: Never mind sitting with such people, if and when he has to pass by them, he does so with head bent, with the utmost humility, with utmost dignity and serenity. There is no pride in him. Also, his behaviour is such that it is apparent that there is no arrogance in his temperament and there is no contempt for others. In other words, there is no istikbár in him, but, in contrast, there is istigná.

Do you understand? Have you understood the examples?

The Qur'án Sharíf states that such people have istigná in them. There is no istikbár in them. "Marrú-kirámá" indicates that they have no istikbár in them, but they have istigná towards such activities. As stated previously: It is not in the capabilities of everyone to differentiate between istikbár and istigná. To recognise and utilise

light and darkness in the correct manner is not within the capabilities of everyone. This topic had commenced when this bandah had said that the lights should be switched off.

Where this topic has been elucidated, with the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of Hadhratwálá, from here another issue becomes apparent. This has entered my mind just at this moment. It concerns adl, (justice) i'tidál (equilibrium) and staying within the hudúd (Sharí'ah limits).

Isráf - Wastefulness

Utilise only as much light as is necessary for that task to be done correctly. If much greater light is used then this will be isráf (wastefulness/ extravagance). Yes, if the task cannot be performed without it, then make use of a bigger globe or additional lights. I do not know much about these newer and fancier lights on the market. However, if that task is being performed satisfactorily, then what is the need for attaching additional and expensive lighting? This is now wasteful spending - fuzúl kharchí and isráf. The person has moved away from adl. Being a sáhibé-wahí, a sáhibe-'Ilm, he still is not aware of what constitutes isráf.

A Qissah:

I cannot remember at this time whether this incident pertains to Hadhrat Umar (RA) or to Hadhrat Alí (RA). But it was a sahábí, with regard to whom Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has stated:

أصـــحابي كـــالنجوم بـــأيهم اقتـــديتم اهتـــديتم

All my Sahábah (RA) are like stars. Whomsoever you follow from among them, you will be rightly guided.

There was a lamp burning at the sahábí's home. The lamps used mustard oil (or something similar) to produce light. Another sahábí (RA) said, "If the flame was bigger, there would have been more light." The sahábí (RA) (it was either Hadhrat Umar RA or Hadhrat Alí RA) replied, "If this light is sufficient for the work to be carried out satisfactorily, what need is there for a brighter light? More oil will be used. Will this then not be isráf?"

This is narrated proof (dalíle-naqlí) of my statements.

The importance of being able to differentiate between roshní and indherá, núr and zulmat, (light and darkness), and the use of everything on every occasion with adl and i'tidál, has been set before you. Incidentally, these topics came to my lips after what happened earlier on, and the topic of roshní and indherá carried on into different avenues. The crux and essence of this topic is that one should save oneself from futile activities, from the aspect of actions as well as speech. This has been proven from the Qur'án Sharíf:

وَالَّذِينَ لاَ يَشْهَدُونَ الزُّورَ وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوا كِرَامًا

It is stated not only here, but at other places as well,

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ

The shán of a mu'min is that he abstains from useless and vain actions and speech - he avoids these activities, he bypasses them, he sidesteps them.

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا اللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوا عَنْهُ

When he hears any person speaking non-beneficially to him, and he realises that it is fruitless and useless, he brushes it aside. Whether the "laghu" is directly at him, that such-and-such a person has said this about him, or it comes to his ears indirectly, he brushes it aside. This is the shán of the mu'min that has been described in the Qur'án Sharíf in different places. So, if that person is one of the ahle-'Ilm, and also a sáhibé-tazkiyah, then, to a proportionately higher degree, should these qualities be in him!

Carrying Tales

That is why it was the method of our Hadhratwálá and other akábir, Hadhrat Gangohí (RA), Hadhrat Hájí Imdádulláh (RA) and others that, when somebody came to them and said, "Such-and-such a person had this to say about you," then their response was, "That person may have said it or not, but you are throwing it directly into my face!" After such a rebuke, this person would not have the courage to carry tales again in the future.

However, people like us respond in a different manner from that of our akábir. We would gleefully ask, "Yes, yes, what more did he have to say? Come, speak openly! Why are you hesitating?" Interest has been aroused, is that not so? We do not know what gossip he will come to relate in the future. He will make up stories. He has found an ear to whisper into. The interest of the listener has been aroused. The listener has lent an ear to his gossip. The fountains for quarrels and fights have been opened. The in-fighting among relatives has now commenced.

Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was going somewhere. Passing a qabrastán, he stopped and ordered for two green twigs to be brought to him. He placed one on one of the graves and the other on a second grave. The Sahábah (RA) enquired, "O Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), what is this?" Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) replied, "The inmate of the one grave was one who did not protect himself from drops of urine falling on him. And the inmate of the second grave was one who did not save himself from carrying tales. Both were being punished. I have placed these green twigs on their graves so that, because of the tasbíh made by the twigs, their punishment would be lightened." Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was sent as a mercy to both the worlds.

Carrying tales is another manifestation of laghu. Laghu has many branches to it. The evil of the tongue is not only to tell lies. The tongue is involved in many evils. Imám Ghazálí (RA) has listed some twenty evils of the tongue.

In tazkiyah of the nafs it is very necessary to save oneself from laghu and láyání. If one does not save onself from these how will one save onself from those aspects which are obviously useless and forbidden? This is the meaning of tazkiyah of the nafs, that one will also protect oneself from those actions which may be permissible (já'iz) in themselves, but which may lead one to what is prohibited. So, protect yourself even from that category of permissible acts.

That is why all the tálibs, but especially the mubtadí (Mubtadí - the beginner; novice), should not involve themselves in issues pertaining to já'íz and ná-já'iz. The tálib should not insist on a certain matter and say, "But this is já'íz!"

Is my voice reaching you?

Those who are staying in the khánqah should not talk to others, should not socialise with others, should not stare at others even though this person may not be looking at the other person with evil intent (bid-nigáh), and may be looking at the other person with muhabbat and with i'tiqád. Nobody is stopping you. However, the person stared at feels it a burden on his heart. It may be that some people's constitutions are weak.

A Qissah:

Hadhrat Mauláná Ilias Sáhib, the founder of the Tablígh Movement, came to the Khánqah in Thánah Bawan. Hadhratwálá used to perform the five times salát in the masjid. After performing the Asr namáz, Hadhratwálá came to stand in the courtyard near the covered area. It was summer time. Hadhratwálá had two servants, one for the big house and one for the small house. The servant from the big house was standing there as he had some necessary work. Hadhratwálá became aware of Hadhrat Mauláná Ilias Sáhib standing at the middle door of the masjid and staring at him. Thinking it to be just incidental, Hadhratwálá did not say anything. However, Hadhrat Mauláná Ilias Sáhib kept on standing there and staring at Hadhratwala. Hadhratwálá told the servant, "Just see who is that Sáhib." Hadhratwálá had a very investigative temperament and used to enquire into every occurrence.

Nowadays, whatever another says, one accepts and one is convinced of its truthfulness. There is no inclination to investigate personally. However, it is very

necessary for a person in a position of responsibility to investigate a situation. It is not sufficient to rely merely on hearsay. How can one act on something merely heard from somebody?

So, the servant went to enquire and reported back, "It is Mauláná Ilias Sáhib." Hadhratwálá said, "Ofo! Being one of us, he does such a thing? Go to him and tell him, ‘The muhabbat you have is in its place. I am aware of it. However, what can I do? My constitution is a bit weak. Whenever somebody stares continuously at me, there is a danger of drops of urine leaking out.' Go and tell him that."

Hadhratwálá took into consideration the status of Hadhrat Mauláná Ilias Sáhib. It was not a situation where "everyone is driven with the same whip". Recognise the individual. We are speaking about roshní and indherá - light and darkness. The branches and masá'il are being enunciated and the method of its application. Recognise the person and the situation.

The message was delivered and Hadhrat Mauláná Ilias Sáhib moved away from there.

Yes, Hadhratwálá had reprimanded him, but the reprimand had taken into account the status of the individual being addressed. Khwájah Sáhib used to sit in the area where the students had their classes, leaning against a pillar. When Hadhratwálá used to come he was able to look at Hadhratwálá, but in such a way that Hadhratwálá was not aware that he was being stared at. He knew very well that if Hadhratwálá were to know of his looking at him from there he would be taken to task in a severe manner! Others would also look at Hadhratwálá but they would sit

in such a hidden manner that they were not noticed by Hadhratwálá as to be watching him.

Have the different types of "laghu" being explained? It is fardh (compulsory) to save oneself from laghu. So, if one goes to sit at those places where people are involved in this laghu, one is giving evidence of one's own un-intelligence and idiocy. This is the meaning of laghu. If you have come there for some specific work, having done the work you have come for, move on. Why are you still sitting around there? Why are you still reluctant to move away? Why are there additional conversations of worldly matters taking place? Have you nothing else to do that you have time for this? It appears that you are useless person, sitting idle. It is a heavy burden on us, seeing that you are one of our people. One feels pained at seeing one of our own in this condition.

Some Rules for Staying in the Khánqah

So, staying in the Khánqah, should one abstain from laghu, or - taubah! taubah! taubah! - should one involve oneself in all the different categories of laghu? Therefore, observe two rules: silence (sukút) and tranquility (sukún). All types of people are here. It may happen that another person may be an acquaintance from before - the person may be hailing from the same locality, the same city or the same country - but, after arriving here one has to stay in such a manner as if to say, "I am alone here and I know nobody. I have absolutely no acquaintances here." One has to have a grip on one's temperament, burden oneself, and stay in such a manner that firmness comes into one. One should reach a stage of nafse-

mutma'innah. One has come for that purpose to develop nisbate-Haqíqí, a special bond with Záte-Bárí Ta'álá.

Have you come here to change your old habits or remain steadfast on them? Of course, to change them. Now, this change, is it a change for the better or a change for the worse? Obviously, it is to change for the better that you have attached yourself to the Khánqah. So, the heart has to undergo continuous change for the better until the heart embraces seclusion. The characteristics of the nafs has been cleansed of the akhláqe-razílah, and the heart has been emblazoned with akhláqe-hamídah in a permanent manner. Have you understood what I am saying? The nafs has evil in it. This needs to be replaced with good. If not, what is the benefit of coming here? Why come? Go back home.

Bear in mind that this is the month of Ramadhán, the month of R = Rahmat; M = Maghfirat; Dh = Dhiyafat; A= Ulfat; and N = Ne'mat - Ra-Ma-Dhá-N.

Seeing that you have come here and are staying here, with the utmost humility and muhabbat, with the responsibility that is placed on me, and with responsibility with which you have come here, I urge upon you not to mix with one another, not to socialise with one another, not to go into one another's rooms. Yes, if there is a dire necessity, then there is no restriction. If there is no necessity, what would be the reason then be? In necessary matters, discarding what is necessary, will lead to harm. In unnecessary matters it, adopting what is not necessary, would result in bringing harm. You have come here to save yourself from harm, to save yourself from evil, to discipline your temperament. You have come to mold your

temperament to khair (goodness). The ímán of a mu'min desires aman (peace and order), not bid-amaní (anarchy). The Islám of a Muslim desires salámatí (tranquility), not shar (evil). That is why a mu'min, a Muslim, should develop his lifestyle in this manner and live among Muslims and non-Muslims in this manner. Husne-akhláq (good character) should be portrayed with everybody.

Which brings me back to what I had said previously with regard to adl and bé-adl: If anybody confronts us with injustice, let justice should not slip from our hands. Good character should be displayed with everybody. This is one branch of nafse-mutma'innah. The nafs has three conditions: nafse-ammárah, nafse-lowwámah and nafse-mutma'innah. The characteristics of each are different. Each one is recognised by the effects each one manifests. You have come her to discard nafse-ammárah, to proceed to nafse-lowwámah and discard it as well and progress to nafse-mutma'innah. This cannot happen until the first and foremost condition is not adhered to, that is, not to socialise.

First Principle in Sulúk

The first principle in sulúk is to assess whether the sheikh with whom one wishes to attach oneself, is a sheikh or not. The sheikh should have knowledge of the ills of the nafs; he should have knowledge of the remedies for treating these ills; he should have knowledge of the different methods of treatment; he should have knowledge of, and the differentiation of socialising and its ramifications. You also have to know who his sheikh was and whether he has stayed in the company of his sheikh. When you have found such a sheikh, and you have i'tiqád and i'timád in

him, then you hand yourself over into his custody like one would hand over one's clothes to a laundryman. Then, every word that issues from his lips is listened to with proper i'tiqád and i'timad. These words are then to be embedded in the heart. Your sheikh will not be with you in your daily life, but his teachings will be will you. So, the manner in which you spend your time in the Khánqah, in the same manner must you spend your time at home. That will be the way you spend your time, with husne-akhláq, not only at home, but in the wilderness, at your work, in the bazaars, in the streets and concourses, amongst your own, amongst strangers and even with your enemies! This is the steadfastness, firmness and perfection that have to be developed. This is what is termed nafse-mutma'innah.

The discussion was on roshní and indherá - light and darkness. Roshní is necessary. One has to behave with equilibrium (i'tidál) - with adl, not with bé-adlí. The essence of this is that if anybody confronts one with bé-adlí, adl should not slip from our hands.

May Alláh Ta'álá grant us tawfíq arzání

Khudá Háfiz.

Chapter No.:

20

APPENDIX AL-HIDÁYAH

Historical Background - The English East India Company

Warren Hastings (1732-1818)

Warren Hastings and Al-Hidáyah

Introductory Address

Dedication

Advertisement to the Second Edition

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib (RA) was born in Sarai Barlah in the district of Aligarh in the year 1329 or1330 H. Hadhrat's (RA) lineage is linked to the noble Sharwání family of landed nobility, and being linked to Sayyid Hussain Ghaurí (RA), the lineage is also Sayyid. Hadhrat (RA) attended the local government school up to standard six, but did not continue with his secular education, preferring rather to study Dín, which he studied initially in his home town and, thereafter, completed his studies in Deoband. Hadhrat (RA) became bay'at to Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí (RA), from whom Hadhrat (RA) received his Khiláfat. This was in the same year that Hadhrat (RA) qualified from Deoband. Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí (RA) stationed Hadhrat (RA) in Jalálábád, where Hadhrat (RA) established the madrasah, Miftáhul-Ulúm. Accommodation was arranged in the khánqáh where sálikín stayed for their self-rectification.

Hadhrat (RA) passed away in Jalálábád in the early hours of Friday, the 17th Jamádul-Ulá 1413 H. (14th November 1992). His qabar is situated in the local qabrastán.

Published by

Dr. Ismail Mangera

P. O. Box 96185

Brixton

2019

South Africa

Telephone: (+27) 011 837-5736

e-mail: imangera@cybertrade.co.za

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FOREWORD

Alhamdulillah, Once again, solely through the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my Sheikh (RA) - also, not forgetting the valued du'ás of our readers - this eighteenth discourse is ready.

A doctor friend was puzzled with regard to a statement made by our Sheikh (RA) to a sálik, who had related that Hadhratjí (RA) had said: "See to your own isláh and do not concern yourself with others." With the problems that the Muslims are facing nowadays, the doctor wanted to know what is one to make of this advice?

On face value, it appears that the advice appears to inculcate a selfish and self-centred attitude. However, the explanation is quite simple. Using the hospital setup as an example, we recognise that advice given to different individuals will be suitable for that particular individual: The patient admitted for a serious illness, will be told to worry about himself and not others in the ward. On the other hand, the junior houseman will be told to worry only about those few patients entrusted into his care, and not about the other patients. Higher up, the registrar will be told to see to all the patients allocated to him and not to those entrusted to the other registrars. The consultant, with greater responsibility, will be told to see to the welfare of all the patients in the ward. The head of the unit will be told to see to all the patients in all the wards in his unit.

In a similar manner, the Sheikh will advice the sálik according to his status. It does not mean that the sálik does not have to worry about others - enjoining right and forbidding wrong is also part of Dín - but it means that he will only be able to fulfil the rights of others if his isláh is made, otherwise these rights will be fulfilled in an imperfect or incomplete manner. It can be seen that only if every individual performs the tasks entrusted to him or her in the correct manner, will society be able to function properly. When this individual is faced with the situation of fulfilling the rights that others have on him, he or she will be able to do this in the way that the Sharí'ah wants. This person will have the necessary qualities to tackle whatever challenges come before him or her.

If the patient in the ward is restored to health, he or she can go back into society and carry on with the duties he or she has. For the patient to be able to do this, the

patient has to concentrate on regaining his or her own full health first. If each patient, instead of seeing to himself, goes about the ward trying to help the other patients, one can see that there will be complete chaos! Alláh Ta'álá states, "O you who believe! It is incumbent on your part that you look after your own souls...." S.5 Á.105

This topic was discussed in some detail in Booklet Number Thirteen, under the sub-heading of "Aman and Bid-amaní". To quote a few lines: "Bid-amaní - anarchy and chaos - is spread throughout the world. The reason is that bid-amaní is rampant within you. Let me repeat: This bid-amaní, this chaos and anarchy, is widespread throughout the world and this is the external manifestation of the chaos and anarchy that is rampant within you. When this bid-amaní disappears from within all of you, then bid-amaní will also disappear from the world..."

From this brief explanation, it is hoped that the reader will be able to have a better perspective when reading these majális. The reader will also be able to pick up the fact that the topics discussed are such that the advices contained in them will apply not only to an individual in one category, but to different individuals at their levels. The discerning reader will note that the advices will be such that the beginner - the mubtadí - will gain something, as well as the accomplished - the muntahí.

It will also become clear that direct contact with one's sheikh is absolutely essential. Constant communications with him and following his prescription, will save the sálik from many errors that he may fall into by merely reading a discourse or listening to one.

One should not conclude that the sheikh is not concerned about the problems facing the ummat - he is more concerned than any of us could be, just like the head of the unit in a hospital will be concerned about all patients, the health of the community from whence the patients come, and the national and international health implications of the diseases that he comes across. He realises that the health of the community is dependant on the health of the individual, and that individual is lying in the bed in the ward. Similarly, the sheikh-e-kámil bears in mind the whole ummat, present and future, and his concern is also for the whole ummat.

May Alláh Ta'álá give us all deep understanding and the taufíq to follow the teachings of our Sheikh (RA).

Dr.I.M.

[This majlis was conducted by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib (RA) on the 8th Shawwál 1412, corresponding with the 13th April 1992, in Jalálábád, India. It should be borne in mind that Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib (RA) passed away a few months thereafter, in November 1992.]

ENSLAVEMENT - GULÁMÍ & ABDIYAT

[Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib (RA) initially commented on his state of health.]

I am coughing greatly. At times, the coughing spells last a long time. No phlegm is expectorated. Only if I cough very hard, will the phlegm come out. Thereafter, I

feel a little bit at ease. However, the body becomes virtually lifeless and it seems that even my life becomes lifeless, for a little while. My stomach and its contents pain because of the great amount of coughing and I have to manouevre myself into a more comfortable position.

There is no limit to my weakness. You may assess yourself: Four of the namázes I perform here. For the Ishá namáz I am unable to go to the masjid. I go in the morning (for the Fajr namáz). I feel the desire to go. Two people hold me and take me and two people hold me and bring me back.

Come nearer.

[There was a very lengthy pause. Hadhrat then continued.]

What shall I say? You have heard much and much is being spoken. What shall I say? You honoured people know a lot. Who from amongst you honoured people is not from the ahle-'Ilm? Everybody understands the simple, straightforward topics.

Núr of Ímán

Alláh Ta'álá has rendered ímán as núr, and He has also rendered Himself, by way of illustration, as Núr:

اللهُّ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ

Alláh is the light of the heavens and the earth (24:35)

This is stated allegorically in order to make people, the creation, understand.

So, on the other hand, ímán has been rendered as núr:

اللهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُمْ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ

Alláh is the Friend of the believers. He derlivereth them from out of darkness into light. (2:257)

And, in the same áyet, kufr has been said to be darkness:

يُخْرِجُونَهُمْ مِنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ

They (the false deities/ shayátín) take those [who disbelieve] out of light into darkness.

Also, in the Álime-Mítháq (The world where the covenant took place. The souls of the whole of mankind were in the presence of Allah Ta'ala when this pledge was taken by all the souls), Alláh Ta'álá had asked:

أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ

Am I not your Rabb? (7:172)

Alláh Ta'álá did not say, "A-lastu Bi-Iláhukum? - Am I not your Deity?" The difference between Iláh and Rabb is as follows:

Iláh refers to: One Who is worshiped. Rabb refers to: Master/ Lord: that Being Who possesses in His control the agencies, resources and means for the complete process of nurturing and rearing. He would be called the Master.

Those who were addressed thus, how did they respond? They replied, "Qálú, Balá." - "They said, ‘We accept'". In other words, they submitted and accepted. Once, having accepted, it is now necessary to uphold that commitment.

When Alláh Ta'álá had placed this burdensome trust before the heavens and the earth and the mountains, they all refused to accept it. You could also have refused to accept it. But, since you have admitted and have accepted Him as your Rabb - and the meaning of Rabb being One Who is a complete Master/ Owner - then the person who has accepted this trust now becomes a complete slave. Is that not so? Think! Ponder! Meditate with a deep insight. Have not the entire creation become slaves in the Álime-Míthâq?

Seeing that the whole of mankind had accepted the status of slavery, implying, "You [O Rabb] are our complete and absolute Master, and we are your complete and absolute slaves," we now have to consider what tasks has the slave to carry out? Is it under "freedom" or "restrainment"? Obviously a slave has no freedom and is all the time constrained to carry out the orders of the master.

So, when one has accepted that one is a slave - when one has verbally acknowledged oneself to be a slave, saying, "Whatever You tell me I will carry out; whatever You instruct, I will execute" - one has taken on this responsibility and this is now a promise. Should now one break one's promise or should one fulfil one's promise? It is obvious that, after committing oneself, one should fulfil one's promise.

A Khalífah

Now we should ponder on this. It is for this reason that Alláh Ta'álá has sent His Messenger - His Deputy - to this world to remind us of what happened in the Álime-Mítháq. And this reminder was a continuous process, from the time of Hadhrat Ádam (AS) right through to Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), and also through to those who are deputies in the true sense of the word. Khalífah means a deputy (ná'ib).

At the outset, the person who is the Khalífah should possess those qualities which are possessed by the one whose Khalífah he is. Further, he should then possess those qualities that will enable him to guide others. In other words, he should firstly be "ráh-bín" and secondly, "ráh-bar" - he should possess these two honourable qualities: be one who travels along the path initially, and then be one to show others the path. Then only will he be termed a Khalífah.

Difference Between the Duties of a Slave and an Employee

So, having made a pledge, this person is now a slave. This means that the person states, "Whatever You instruct, I will carry out." This is inherent in the acceptance of the premise stated above. It is also obvious that a slave does not have just one task. Have you understood the sequences of this argument? To repeat: does a slave have only one category of work? No, never! A slave has to carry out whatever task the master commands him to do.

Therefore, it is apparent that insán (mankind) occupies the position of enslavement, whereas the other creation - that of angels - occupies the position of employment. The angels are not like slaves: whatever specific task is shown to them, that they

will carry out. It is a special favour, and their muhabbat, that other tasks are given to them in order to make them happy.

The angels had spoken out, "You have created insán and have stated insán to be Khalífah." Because of their spiritual and truthful insight, they commented, "They will do such-and-such deeds." Alláh Ta'álá said, "Yes, but you do not know what I know. What you are saying is the very basis for making insán a Khalífah, for this insán will enforce on himself the execution of My orders." The comments that the angels had made were not objections or complaints, but the comments were made "muhabbatan" - out of affection. In other words, they were presenting themselves for additional tasks. Alláh Ta'álá said, "You will not be able to carry out these tasks."

So, the angels are created in the position of employees. Some are placed in charge of rains, others over the winds, others on cultivated land, others over mountains, others are porters of the Arsh, others are made scribes, and so forth, and so forth.

But insán is not an employee - he is a slave. And a slave has not just one specified task to perform: Whatever the branches that pertain to his life, whatever the tasks related to these branches, all these tasks are now his responsibility. "Alastu-birabbikum "did not entail merely bringing of ímán. Having said, "Balá!"one is now stating one's acceptance and, having accepted, one has accepted Divinity as well, implying, "Whatever You instruct that I will carry out, as I am merely a slave." One's external 'íbádat is manifestation of this Divinity. All these implications are included, is that not so?

True Meaning of 'Íbádat

Now, whatever task that is performed according to the orders of Bárí Ta'álá will be in the confines of 'íbádat. In essence, this insán mu'min who came with ímán from the 'Álame-Mítháq, now, whatever he is ordered to do and he does so, walking under the canopy of these orders, he will be involved in 'íbádat during that period and not "worldly" activity. Since he is involved in tasks of 'íbádat, then it is apparent that the whole and complete life of a mu'min, even when it pertains to a mundane thing like sleeping, falls in the category of 'íbádat. And when he departs even for one second from these orders, he is not in 'íbádat. Do you understand? Having said, "Qálú balá!", one has now bought difficulties. One has brought these on oneself, for you could have refused when the offer was presented.

Therefore, the mu'min bandah is in 'íbádat all the time, provided that he is doing his work subservient to the orders of Bárí Ta'álá. This work may be in the categories of the cultivation of fields, or trading, or employment, or manufacturing and industry, or it may be business partnerships, or pertaining to the legal profession, or financial institutions, or mutual transactions, or marriages, or giving birth, or rearing of children, or whether it pertains to dealing with compassion and empathy with others, or in serving the community during the time that it necessitates - all these will fall in the category of 'íbádat. This now forms the criterion, referred to as the Laws of the Sharí'ah, and not Laws of Takwín. The Laws of Takwín have been entrusted to the angels (but may, at times, be entrusted to insán as well). However, here we are referring to the Laws of the Sharí'ah.

Seeking 'Ilm Is Fardh

Now, it becomes fardh (compulsory) for every mu'min Muslim to learn the laws of the Sharí'ah to the extent of his or her needs; and it becomes fardhe-kifáyah to establish a group of mu'minín that will have an all-comprehensive knowledge of the Sharí'ah. If such a group is not established, then all the mu'minín will have sinned.

This is like the situation of Janázah namáz: If nobody from the local community has read the namáz, then the whole community will have sinned; and if just a few have read the namáz, then the obligation will be deemed to have been fulfilled on behalf of the whole community.

To continue: It is necessary and fardh for a group from amongst the Muslims to be in existence, this group having a full and comprehensive knowledge of the laws of the Sharí'ah and the orders of Alláh Ta'álá. This group will have no other duties. If this group involves itself in any other tasks, this other work will be defective and its original work will also be defective, because how can two tasks be performed simultaneously? This is, thus, distribution of duties.

Two Tasks Cannot Be Performed Simultaneously

Evidence of this is present in this worldly life in connection with employment in the government sector. Let me relate an incident that happened yesterday. A person, a Muslim, is for a long time a government employee in the lower echelons of the revenue department. A very good man, a good worker and a very honest man. He relates a most interesting situation concerning himself. He said, "I am

requesting a mashwarah (opinion) from you." I replied, "What mashwarah do you want?" He said, "It is not good to stay put in one job, especially these days, where times are very uncertain. So, I wish to study tibb (hakímí medicine)." I replied, "How are you going to study tibb? It requires a lot of time. It also requires gaining entrance to a madrasah. How are you then going to work in the revenue department?" He said, "I have asked some people at the tibb college. They say such books are available which I can study while sitting at home. Whatever problems I come across, I can ask the tutors to solve. I can also write examinations from time to time. I will be able to complete the course in four years." I said, "It is a very good idea. If it can be done in this way, then do it." He also said, "I am getting frustrated with my employment. Such laws are coming into force which our Islám forbids. But I am persevering." I said, "Do not leave until your have found some alternate means of livelihood. This is the saying of our buzurgs. Otherwise you will bring on calamities. Your idea is excellent. Go ahead and study." He said, "That is fine. You have given permission. However, I have to ask the Collectorsáhib as well." I asked, "What need is there to ask the Collector sáhib?" He explained, "I am a government employee, and a government employee is not allowed to do any other work. If the government employee wishes to do business, he has to do it in the name of his son. He will not be allowed to trade in his own name. Should they discover his ruse, he will be suspended from duties and dismissed."

So you can see the rules of the government: A government employee cannot do any other work in his private capacity. There will be defect in either this work or the other. Do you see the point in this illustration?

In the same manner, the 'álim, who has gained expertise in the laws of the Dín, has to remain with it. It is not correct for him to involve himself in any other work or take up any other work. And this is based on his studies - on the kitábs of law, from Qudúrí till the final Hidáyah, after which comes the all-comprehensive Dorah Sharíf. So this mudarris, if he wishes to attain and maintain his expertise, with dalá'il (proofs) and incontrovertible argument, theoretical and narrative (aqlí aur naqlí), he has no permission to involve himself in any other work. Why? The reason is that there will either be harm on this side or on the other side. Can a kitáb be learnt without proper thought and contemplation? Of course not. So, that mudarris who really wants to become like this, will have to follow what has been stated above. And if one does not want to be like that, then he can do as he pleases.

However, it is fardh-e-kifáyah to have a group like this. Do not harass them into doing other work. This is na-já'iz.

'Ilm and Tablígh

By way of example - it is necessary to state this directly -: those who go out in jamá'at and request others to go out in jamá'at, to go out for a chillah, will be told: "The work that you are doing, carry on with it. Do it with full concentration. Do it with sidq and ikhlás within the bounds of the Sharí'ah. Do it with excellence. This requires 'Ilm. Without correct knowledge, can a person do tablígh? Never. One does not know what will be said from where. And there is need for details (tafsíl). If the details are not known, the creation will fall into difficulties. The rights of the creation (huqúqul-ibád) will be discarded. The rights of those connected with one,

will be discarded. There will be shortcomings. There will be shortcomings in those commands that are necessary and compulsory with regard to the financial obligations on oneself. There will now be problems because the details (tafsíl) are not known.

So, carry on with the work that you are doing. However, do not harass those who are involved in the tasks of ta'lím and tadrís (learning and teaching). Also, do not harass that tálibul-'Ilm who is engrossed in attaining the 'Ilm of the laws (qánún) with clear proofs (dalá'il aur baráhín). Otherwise, you will turn his heart's attention away in a different direction and he will be deprived of this ('Ilm). That is why do not harass him. These are laws of the Sharí'ah.

As for that student whose studies are superficial, a student who has enrolled at the madrasah but he his heart is not in studying, his situation is different. Being here, he is freed of his household duties. At home, his father would order him to give water to the buffalo (bhens), to give it some fodder; to bring back some millet from the field. So, being at the madrasah, he is freed from these duties. Here he receives prepared food, a room that is ready, and arrangements for lighting. If he has stated that he is poor, he is even given an allowance. However, his studying is very superficial. He is not suited to become an expert. Never mind becoming expert, he is not suited to even teach! If he is a háfijí or a molvísáhib, he will get to be an imám somewhere. This is fine. However, he will not be able to teach "Mizáne-Munsh'ab". He will not be able to teach even "Taysarul-Mubtadí", which is considered to be a simple kitáb. It takes a proper 'álim to be able to teach "Taysarul-Mubtadí" (these are some very basic and simple text books prescribed

for beginners). A shaky molvísáhib will not be able to teach it. This topic is mentioned merely incidentally.

To continue: It is obvious and it has been proven that by replying, "Balá" to the questioned posed, "Alastu-birabbikum?" one has accepted oneself to be a slave. And a slave does not have one specified duty. Whatever task he is given to do, he carries out. This may be related to 'íbádat in itself, like namáz, rozah, zakát and hajj. Namáz is for everybody, but not zakát. Rozah is for everybody but not hajj.

Zakát is not a duty on all mu'minín. There are some conditions attached: there is the pre-requisite of having wealth. Namáz and rozah are bodily functions. There is no need of wealth. All those who are sane, bá ligh and healthy are under obligation. It is necessary to learn the relevant masá'il to the extent of necessity. When a person has some wealth, he has to learn the masá'il regarding zakát, fitrah qurbání, etc. to the extent of necessity. When a wife enters the scene, the husband has to learn the laws regarding support and maintenance of the wife. When he has children, he has to learn the laws with regard to their upbringing. Thus, whatever secondary aspects the individual's lifestyle now takes on, so also it will be his responsibility to learn the laws relevant to these secondary aspects.

Protection of Islám

Also, in order to prove the truthfulness of Islám to our antagonists, it is necessary to have full and comprehensive 'Ilm, theoretical and narrative. Additionally, it is necessary to present illustrations, with references from the very books of the antagonists, during discussions and debates. For example, it will be said to them,

"Whatever Alláh Ta'álá states in the Qur'án Sharíf is nothing new. You check in your Taurah or your Bible or your scriptures. In these you will find that the final messenger who will be sent will be Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam); that it will be necessary to believe in him and it will be necessary to become a Muslim. Whoever does not do so, will not be entitled to be called a believer." The relevant references will be provided to them, with the comment, "Check it out. It is in your book."

In debates as well, it will be necessary to present the relevant references in their scriptures. On their criticisms of the many wives of Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), it will pointed out to them, "That person whom you consider to be a prophet, whom you call Autár (this is a prominent figure in the Hindu religion), how many wives did he have? As for our prophet, Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), who had the strength of a thousand men, you have the audacity to criticise him for having nine wives? You do not have such a mouth that is worthy of criticising our Prophet." This reply has silenced the critic. This is being given to you as an illustration.

What type of 'álim is it who can do this? It is one who has all-encompassing 'Ilm. It is not the task of each and everyone to study with such depth. Not everyone holds within him the capabilities for this.

The Tasks of the Slave

To continue: A slave does not have one specified duty. He is not only required to make 'íbádat but business dealings also form part of his duties. He needs to ask

himself: "Do I do business alone or do I do it in partnership with another?" If done in partnership, what are the laws with regard to Shirákat and Musharikat, etc.? There are four types of partnerships. One has to acquaint oneself with the relevant laws. Another situation: If one becomes a wakíl (representative), the laws with regard to this should be learnt. Does the kitáb "Hidáyah" not contain chapters on wikálat, on hadhánat, on kifálat, on shahádat (these are technical terms used to categorise different types of business dealings and related matters. Details appear in the book - Al-Hidayah, which is a prescribed textbook in the Darul Ulooms), etc.? These are all laws.

Thus, the whole life of a mu'min is that of enslavement. Take another detail: Passing urine is also a task. How should one do this? How should one sit? Where should one sit? If one is in wild terrain and one has the urge to pass urine, where should one sit? How should one sit? How does one prevent droplets of urine splashing on one? Is this not one type of restriction also, or is it freedom? So, we are taught also how to urinate.

When the Sahábah (RA) arrived in the presence of the Christian king, he asked them, "We have heard that your Prophet teaches you how to urinate and defecate?" They replied, "Yes! We were like animals before, not knowing how to urinate and defecate. We were like animals, but now we have been transformed into human beings. Yes, our Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) also teaches how to urinate." The Sahábah (RA) held the honour of the Laws of Islám in their hearts. They were not ashamed. "Yes, before, we were like animals, urinating and

defecating like animals, but we have been taught how to do these as human beings."

The Christian king then asked, "He taught you how to eat as well?" They replied, "Yes! Previously, we ate like animals - eating while standing and while strolling around, and also eating indiscriminately. Now we have been taught how to eat like human beings."

This is the lifestyle of enslavement. The Sahábah (RA) were saying that they were taught how to pass urine and pass stools, that they were taught how to eat and drink. Previously, they did not know how to perform these tasks like human beings, but carried them out like animals.

The Christian king further questioned them, "We have heard that you were also taught how to live with one another?" They replied, "Yes! Previously we were like wolves and carnivorous animals, ready at all times to devour one another. Now, we have been transformed into human beings: we have been told how to live with one another; we have been taught not to cause any grief, neither to ourselves nor to others, whether internal (bátiní) or external (záhirí), whether it relates to wealth (málí), physical body (jismání) or inner feelings (qalbí). Previously, we were not human beings, but we were like wild animals, like wolves and tigers."

Is my voice reaching you? Yes?

The Muslim of today should recognise himself. O mu'min, you had promised to be a slave. To what extent have you fulfilled that promise? In appearance you are a

human being, but look at your condition. Are you not a wolf? Are you not a tiger? Are you not an ox, an animal, that you eat in a standing position?

You urinate any old how, sitting as you wish or standing and urinating, so that droplets splash back on you, not being ill either. O mu'min, recognise yourself! What degree of a slave are you? Believing in your Master, by making 'íbádat only, you can never be called a kámil mu'min. You have wandered away from enslavement. It is possible that your activity is like that of an angel, but you have not been sent as an angel. You have been sent as someone else - that of being a slave, whose duties entail not just one specific task. Judge yourself on this. Otherwise, there were numerous angels present. What need was there for you? Your need - the manner in which you were created - which you acknowledged, was to be in enslavement. Live in this world in this manner. For the duration of the period that you were not sent forth into this world, you were in the situation of the angels. In other words, you were in a state of musháhadah-Haqq (visualising Alláh Ta'álá). At the Rúhání level, you were in musháhadah of Alláh Ta'álá. You were then made slaves and sent to this world and a variety of tasks entailing enslavement and bondsman ship were entrusted to you.

Do you understand the concept? Do you comprehend the sequence of my narration?

So, in what category are we mu'min of Alláh Ta'álá's? We are in the category of being His slaves. Ever individual has to ponder whenever he/she does any task, "Am I doing this under the mantle of enslavement or under the mantle of

‘emancipation'?" We have been given different body parts, each of which has a different function. We have hands, feet, eyes, a tongue, a nose, a heart and a stomach. It is obvious that the function of each is different and not one. Therefore, the function that the eyes have been given, the function that the tongue has been given, the function that the ears have been given, the function that the heart has been given, the function that the hands have been given, the function that the feet have been given, have all to be performed from the perspective of enslavement and under the mantle of the orders of Alláh Ta'álá, and not as "free" people, using the eyes any old how. So too the tongue, the ears, the hands, the legs and the stomach, filling the latter any old how. So, all these body parts of this slave are the slaves. They are not to be utilised contrary to this concept.

The Taufiq of Taubah Can Disappear

Were you to do this, you should be drowning in your perspiration, and you should acknowledge and confess to your transgression. It should not happen that, having transgressed, you develop pride. Confess quickly and show remorse. Alláh Ta'álá is saying, "From My side all sins are then forgiven. However, take care in the future. Do not persist with transgression. Otherwise:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا ثُمَّ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا ثُمَّ ازْدَادُوا كُفْرًا لَمْ يَكُنِ اللهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِ

Verily, those who believe, then disbelieve, then believe (again), then disbelieve, then continue with their disbelief - it is not the way of Alláh to forgive them, and He will not to guide them unto a way. (4:137)

What it means is that the taufíq for making taubah has ended. Taubah has been made into a sport. The remorse that is now shown is just customary. The reasoned, Shar'í remorse, concurrent with the awe and respect of Alláh Ta'álá, is not present. There is no credence to this type of remorse. Otherwise, why is there transgression time and again? It is apparent that the remorse that is shown is not the remorse that is a reasoned and Shar'í remorse, accompanied with the awe and esteem of Alláh Ta'álá.

A káfir also shows remorse. Children also become ashamed. But these are not the same as true remorse. There is no credibility to this type of remorse. True remorse is to have regret for committing evil deeds, to be thoroughly ashamed. Then, how could the evil be repeated?

This is an illness. Just as a person suffers from a physical illness, this illness is the illness of sinfulness. This illness is catastrophic. At the time of death, the physical ailment will come to an end, but this illness of sinfulness does not end but accompanies the person. Its effects will be carried over to the other world.

Do you understand?

The Importance of Taqwá

That is why Alláh Ta'álá says, "O mu'minín! I am emphasizing to you time and again!" Concerning what? Concerning taqwá. "Adopt taqwá!" your actions, internal or external, individual or collective, let these be with taqwá. This is the essence and crux. The details have been given previously, and this is the synopsis of the laws of Alláh Ta'álá. In other words, complete and perfect obedience, the

methodology being: having correct beliefs and performing good deeds, external and internal.

Therefore, to repeat: what is the crux and essence of all this? It is taqwá. Therefore, Alláh Ta'álá is saying, "O mu'minín! I am alerting you, and time and again, I am alerting you, so that freedom does not enter into you, for this freedom is a difficulty - it is something harmful. It is My compassion, My mercy and My favour, that is alerting you:

يَا أَيهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تَّقُوا اللهَ

O you believers, fear Alláh!

Alláh Ta'álá is making a promise to the mu'min bondsman, the Sáhib-e-taqwá, and Alláh Ta'álá is One Who fulfils His promises, especially when we note that He has told us to keep to our promises. Not fulfilling a promise is a defect, and Alláh Ta'álá is free of all defects.

Alláh Ta'álá's Promise to the Sáhib-e-Taqwá

What promise has He made? Alláh Ta'álá states that He promises:

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا

That person who adopts taqwá, Alláh will find for him a place of exit. (65:2)

Exit from where? Exit from that difficulty that he is involved in. A "difficulty" is actually that which is "harmful". So, Alláh Ta'álá is saying, "I shall create and establish those means and methods whereby you will be able to come out of that

harmful situation." The promise has been made. What harmful place has not been specified, thus it means any type of harmful situation. So, what type of harm?

Let us see: There are two realms - this world and the hereafter. There are two possibilities: either harm or benefit. In this world also there can be harm or benefit, and in the hereafter as well, there can be harm or benefit. If one is present then the other is absent. Two opposites can not co-exist. For example: If illness goes, then it is replaced by health. One may be superficial and the other strong. For example: illness disappears and health returns, but strength is also necessary. So, harms have their different degrees and benefits also have their different degrees.

To continue: Is there any individual who does not want to remove himself from harm? Also, is there any individual who does not desire to gain benefit? There can be no such persons. So, seeing the means are available to come out of harm, and to attain benefit, is it intelligent not to adopt these means? Of course not! Therefore, when the means for removing the harms are adopted, the harms will be shed and the benefit, which is the original state, will be evident. However, strength will not have been attained. Do you understand this point?

Alláh Ta'álá is speaking of the harm that comes to you. What are the details concerning these harms? These are related to this world or the hereafter. For example: One is overtaken by poverty - this is a cause of harm. One falls ill - this is a cause of harm. One is humiliated by others - this is a cause of harm. And so forth. Alláh Ta'álá states further, "For those who are faced by these harms, I will create

and establish means and methods to remove these harms so that you may find your way out of these harms."

You are not feeling sleepy? Some feel sleepy while resting on flowers but not on thorns. Let there be a musical show, then sleep does not come, but when one is sitting at virtuous places, then sleep comes instantaneously! Understanding comes when one is fully awake, when the constriction in one's temperament is gone. Just listening with one's ears is meaningless. This is mentioned just incidentally.

So, do you understand the points made by this servant? This is a commentary of this áyet that is being given. You must have studied the commentary of Jalálain or a translation of the Qur'án Sharíf? Have you studied it in this manner? Have you understood it in this way? Has it been taught in this way?

Alláh Ta'álá is saying, "This is My promise: I will create and establish the means and methodology in this world - for this is a world where means have to be used (álam-e-asbáb) - for the removal of harms, and for benefit to come in their place." For strength to come into these benefits, there will be other methods, but, at least, he has come out of his predicaments. This is Alláh Ta'álá's promise for the mu'min muttaqí, to remove the harms that befall him.

Protection from Sins

Also, there is another realm. There, too, there is harm and benefit. The causes of harm and benefit of that realm occur in this world. The harm of that realm is to contravene the laws of the Sharí'ah, which means the commission of sins. So, contravening the Laws is zulm (oppression) and zulm is a harm, so that sinning -

contravening the Laws - is also a harm. And this harm is much greater. "Therefore, when you mu'minín adopt taqwá, I shall create the means, methods and resources within you to protect yourselves from those things that cause harm, i.e. sins. I shall create within your heart such a thing which will enable you to escape from sinning, which is much worse than the worst of worldly harms that can befall one. You will also remain protected from these harms. If that harm were to occasional befall you, the quality of that taqwá within you will be so molded that you will become so utterly remorseful that you will repeatedly confess your sin to Me. I shall then remove the harm of that sin!"

Do you see? The promise has been fulfilled, whether the harm is a worldly harm - which is gair-ikhtiyárí - or whether it is a harm related to the hereafter - which is ikhtiyárí. You have been given the choice and power - ikhtiyár. However, such a thing will be created in your ikhtiyár, in your irádah (resolve) that you will not have the resolve to act contrary to the Sharí'ah. Should such a resolve arise, you will immediately be warned and cautioned. If you do get involved, you will not be at ease without counteracting it and compensating for it. From My side, there will be forgiveness."

However, to whom has Záte Bárí Ta'álá made this promise? He has made it to the muttaqí mu'min. "Worldly harm, if it comes, I will repel, and harm to your hereafter, which comprises sins, I will also repel from you. This I will do by creating a methodology in your heart." This is the promise that has been made by Haqq Ta'álá to the muttaqí mu'min.

إِنَّ اللهَّ لاَ يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ

Verily, Alláh does not go against His promise. (3:9)

Then Záte Bárí Ta'álá will cause this bandah to tread on the path of taqwá till death.

What do you understand? You have come and seated yourself over here. Let me repeat: What is Haqq Ta'álá saying? "I shall maintain you as a muttaqí till death, seeing that you mu'minín have adopted taqwá with ikhlás and sidq. I shall keep you as such - that is My promise. Should you slip up by chance, I shall not let you stay down. Should you transgress, then that procedure will take place whereby there will be a retraction and compensation. So, till death will I keep you as a muttaqí. You, O mu'minín, will return to Me as muttaqí because you were sent to the earth with taqwá. So, having returned with taqwá, here is Jannat waiting for you! This is your home. There is no censure here, no reprimand, no punishment and no torment. Yes, I will question you slightly out of muhabbat, to bring some happiness to your heart."

Do you understand? Do you understand the promise made by Záte Bárí Ta'álá to this slave who lived in a state of bondage and in a state of being mu'min muttaqí? And Alláh Ta'álá will not go against His promise.

Removing Hirs And Tamá'

That leaves the second aspect, for which He has also made a promise:

وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لاَ يَحْتَسِبُ

And He (Alláh Ta'álá) will provide for him (the mu'min muttaqí) whence he never expected. (65:3)

Now, this second aspect has also come in, concerning the stomach: Fill it. But subject to the laws and rules specified by Alláh Ta'álá. Let there be no hirs-o-tamá' (greed and avarice). Are hirs-o-tamá' not harmful qualities? They are, and very harmful! The person afflicted with these qualities has no peace of mind. He cannot achieve repose. All the time he is spurned on: "Do this! Do that! Do it this way! No, do it that way! That person has accumulated in that manner - let me do the same! Let me also accumulate!" There is no thought given to what is já'iz or what is ná-já'iz. There is no concern of what belongs to him or what belongs to others. Hirs-o-tamá' spurns him on to become like this.

It is like taking strychnine: Is strychnine not a poison? By ingesting it, a person will definitely create difficulties for himself and harm himself internally.

Therefore, O mu'min muttaqí, these qualities within you that cause harm, will be removed from you in such a manner that your thoughts will not even stray in that direction. In their stead will come a quality of benefit, which is qaná'at (contentment).

Have you understood the point, or not yet? You have taken a tasbíh and seated yourself, and even earned the name of "Tasbíhwálá"! What I have explained is the actual, detailed and proven "tasbíh"!

Hirs-o-tamá' (greed and avarice) are harmful qualities and qaná'at (contentment) is a beneficial quality. Haqq Ta'álá is saying, "O mu'min muttaqí, I will create within

you such a methodology that the harmful qualities of hirs-o-tamá' will be removed and the beneficial quality of qaná'at will replace these. If you a re a mu'min muttaqí, then your gaze will not go to the means. If your gaze does fall on the means, it will only be from the aspect of usage and not with the concept that the means will bring success to your tasks. I have created the means. Are the means pointless? Should your gaze turn in the direction of the means, it will be only by way of utilisation, which is My command, that its utilisation is also 'íbádat, provided there is no hirs-o-tamá' and there is qaná'at.

However, the greater the amount of means used, proportionately the difficulties will increase. If there is no qaná'at, then there will be no sleep either. This person will not be able to eat with freedom and peace of mind. He will not have a life of ease and comfort. It will be just the opposite: He will be running around like a headless chicken!

To repeat what Alláh Ta'álá has said:

وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لاَ يَحْتَسِبُ

And He (Alláh Ta'álá) will provide for him (the mu'min muttaqí) whence he never expected. (65:3)

"O mu'min muttaqí, in attaining your rizq, I will create within you the methodology of removing another harmful quality and replace it with a beneficial quality. This is My promise to you. My methodology will encompass both your spiritual rizq (bátiní) and your physical rizq (bataní). I shall establish such

methods, such avenues, such forms that will make you receive bátiní rizq as well as bataní rizq from far and wide places.

Bátiní Rizq

"From the aspect of 'íbádat, I shall instil in your heart that you sit in such places where the rizq of My muhabbat (love) will keep on increasing - and not decreasing, for decreasing is harmful - and which will keep on providing assistance in My muhabbat. This is beneficial." So much so, that Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had also said,

اللهم ارزقني حبك و حب من ينفعني حبه عندك

O Alláh! Grant me Your love and the love of those whose love will benefit me by You.

"I shall instill in your heart such qualities that will save you from harms - like being in wrong places, and, instead, being in places that will assist in My muhabbat - qualities that will be of benefit to your batní rizq and your bátiní rizq."

Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has rendered "rizq" as "muhabbat", and muhabbat is a bátiní quality. You can see, rizq has been attained, rizq being of two types: batní and bátiní. In the latter category as well, you will be given such methods that will never occur to you. You will wonder, "How did I manage to perform this íbádat?" The answer from Alláh Ta'álá is, "I caused you to do it - do it this way!" The weakness in you has been replaced with strength. Why has this been done? The reason is that you are a mu'min muttaqí, a sáhibe-taqwá.Therefore,

weakness has gone and strength has come, together with courage and valour. This is the promise of Alláh Ta'álá manifesting itself: Min hytho lá yahtasib.

Just look at the Sahábah (RA): What was their condition before they became Sahábah (RA)? Their condition was pitiful: they were a disgraced people, living in dire poverty. However, when they became mu'min - mu'min muttaqí in the proper meaning - then how did the unseen favours and unseen assistance from Alláh Ta'álá not pour down on them! All types of blessings and assistance, both batní and bátiní, were showered on them. Numerous examples are there as evidence. As long as the mu'min remained this way, the promises of Alláh Ta'álá were also fulfilled in this manner. When the mu'min changed, then changes also came:

Alláh Ta'álá states:

إِنَّ اللّهَ لاَ يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ

Alláh does not change the condition of a nation as long as they do not change what is within themselves.)13:11(

This is sufficient proof of what I have said. Did changes not appear afterwards? Alláh Ta'álá is virtually saying, "Being a mu'min, when he brought in changes in his taqwá, he was expressing a desire for changes to come from My side as well. So, I brought about the changes!" The reason for saying this is that changes do not come without a cause. To substitute good with evil for no valid reason is zulm (oppression). Zulm is a defective characteristic and Alláh Ta'álá is free of any defects, and, therefore, free of zulm.

We, who are living in this world in this age, should ponder over our condition. Where Alláh Ta'álá has, on numerous occasions, alerted us: "Ittaqulláh! Ittaqulláh! Ittaqulláh! Ittaqulláh!" are we an exemplifications of this or not? If not, then what are we portraying? Will the promise of blessings from Alláh Ta'álá remain in place or not? We have, therefore, caused a change to occur by the way we act and behave.

Muráqabah-e-Maut & Muhásabah A'mál

Do you see? Záte Bárí Ta'álá has repeatedly directed the mu'min, because of the demands of his ímán, towards taqwá. "Adopt taqwá! What is the reason for not adopting taqwá? You are mu'minín. Just as you have conviction on My Being and Attributes, similarly, you have conviction on the hereafter and on the reckoning that will take place. Therefore, taqwá should come into you through the demands of your conviction. Taqwá should not be departing. You should not be acting contrary to taqwá .

"O mu'min! Why are you not pondering on the scene of the plains of resurrection and reckoning in the hereafter? These plains are inviting you towards taqwá, that the reckoning will take place after death. So, why are you forgetful of death? Why are you not engaged in pondering over death (muráqabah-e-maut)? Why are you not taking stock of your deeds (muhásabah)? O mu'min! You should be continuously taking stock of your actions and, at the same time, thinking about death and about the day of reckoning in the hereafter. I have commanded you to engage in muráqabah-e-maut and muhásabah-e-a'mál. When this is done, then

taqwá will come into you. This is what I have been explaining to you and I have also presented the method for attaining this, that you should continuously be thinking of attaining perfection (kamál) in your taqwá. That is why I am saying:

وا اتَّقُوا اللهَّ َ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللهَّ َ إِنَّ اللهَّ َ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونيَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُ

O ye who believe! Fear Alláh! And let every person look to that which it sendeth forth for the morrow (i.e. Qiyámat). And fear Alláh! Verily, Alláh is informed of what ye do!)59:18(.

The phrase "let every person look to that which it sendeth forth for the morrow (i.e. Qiyámat)" is explicit on the instruction for engaging in muráqabah. This is proof of meditation on death (muráqabah-e-maut).

Tasawwuf, in its entirety, is the very Sharí'ah - internally and externally.

A Qissah

Hadhratwálá (RA) mentioned a qissah:

There was an age when the Muslims, and even kings, had tremendous faith and confidence in the buzurgs and had the habit of visiting them regularly. A particularly king had this habit as well and he used to regularly visit a certain buzurg who used to live in the jungle.

This particularly buzurg had the routine of taking a particular tablet at a specific time daily. It so happened that the king also came to visit daily at this particular time. One day the thought struck him, "This buzurg is taking this tablet daily but

there appears to be nothing else to eat or drink besides the tablet. I wonder why he takes this tablet?" The buzurg became aware of his thinking through kashf. He gave the king one tablet, saying, "You take and drink this tablet." The king became extremely happy and went home and drank the tablet.

Now, this tablet was one that was extremely invigourating and stimulating, so the king became extremely steamed up. He had to let off steam. He visited all his wives, and then visited all his laundís (female slaves), but his urges were still not satisfied. He thought to himself, "Ohoho! This is my condition by taking merely one tablet! Oho! And what about the buzurg? Living in the jungle, he has one daily! He is maintaining his buzurgí and also fulfilling his passions! Damsels must be visiting him!"

Despite having such thoughts about the buzurg, the king did not stop visiting the buzurg. The buzurg again perceived what he was thinking through kashf.

Suddenly, the buzurg's mood became very serious. He addressed the king very sombrely, "It seems that there are only forty days left before your death! My advice is that you hand over the reigns of your kingdom to your son - make him the crown prince. And prepare for the hereafter!"

The king became terrified. The words of the buzurg were like the hiss of a snake as it prepares to attack. He forgot about the tablet as the spectre of death rose in front of him. As he was about to leave to commence his preparations, the buzurg handed him forty tablets, saying, "Take one everyday so that you do not become weak."

The king departed. He made his son the heir apparent to the throne and entrusted the running of the affairs of the kingdom to him. As for himself, he devoted his entire time to 'íbádat. Sticking to the buzurg's instructions, he took his one tablet daily. He was thus nourishing himself with both rizq bátiní and rizq jismání. Forty days passed in this manner. However, the awaited death did not come! He waited a few days more but still death did not overtake him.

He decided to visit the buzurg again and complained to him, "Hadhrat! What have you done? My kingdom has slipped out of my hands, and here I am, still alive!" The buzurg replied calmly, "Your kingdom has not disappeared - it is with your son. Whenever you wish, you take it back and take up the reigns of rule again. It has not gone anywhere. But, what I am interested in knowing is whether you have been taking the tablets given to you or not?" The king replied, "Huzúr, if I had not taken them, I would have been like a dead person without death coming to me." The buzurg spoke again, "So, you took your tablets daily? Tell me then, how many wives did you go to everyday and how many of your laundís did you go to everyday?" The king replied, "Huzúr, death was staring me in the face, where could I go to them? With death standing in front of me, my thoughts did not even go in that direction!"

Now, listen carefully to what the buzurg had to say! He said, "You were given respite for forty days, whereas I do not have respite for the space of one breath even. If I breathe in, I am not certain whether I would be given an opportunity to breathe out again; and if I breathe out, I am not certain whether I would be given an opportunity to breathe in again! I do not have respite even for the duration of

even one breath!" The king was full of regret for his unfounded suspicions, "Huzúr, I humbly ask for your forgiveness. You have answered the doubts I had."

Hadhratwálá (RA) mentioned this qissah for the lessons it contained. The king was faced with the spectre of death: When would it come? How would it come? In his concern, he forgot completely about his wives and his laundí's. Do you see the effect of muráqabah-e-maut?

Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has said,

لموت أكثروا ذكر هـادم اللـذات أي

Increase your remembrance of that which terminates desires, that is death.

This is encompassed in the statement of Alláh Ta'álá:

خَبِيرٌ يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللهَ إِنَّ اللهَ

O ye who believe! Fear Alláh! And let every person look to that which it sendeth forth for the morrow (i.e. Qiyámat). And fear Alláh! Verily, Alláh is informed of what ye do!)59:18(.

The essence of this is the following:

بـل أن تموتـوا موتـوا ق

Die before your death.

This means that those aspects that are associated with your nafs (carnal desires) should be forged such that they are utilised according to the orders of Záte Bárí

Ta'álá, This is because you are His slave. Should you discard the commands of Alláh Ta'álá until the time of your death, then you are not His slave. You have reversed the roles. You are not His slave.

Marital Relations

Therefore, approach your wives subjecting yourselves to the commands of Alláh Ta'álá. Did the Sahábah (RA) not approach their wives? Was death not in front of them? Did the Nabí (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) not approach his wives? Was he not absorbed all the time in a state of musháhadah-Haqq? Approaching your wives is also 'íbádat. Otherwise, why would Alláh Ta'álá have created the means for this? Of course, it should not be done outside the boundary of the commands of Alláh Ta'álá - this would be contrary to the demands of taqwá. If it is done within the bounds of commands of Alláh Ta'álá, then this is taqwá. This is abdiyat, this is enslavement. Does this answer any doubts any of you may be entertaining?

Do you want to exceed the Nabí (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)? Do you want to live exceeding the Sahábah (RA) in taqwá? Were they not muttaqí? Their taqwá was such that, in comparison, your taqwá is insignificant. Yet, they carried out their duties appropriate to the situation and subject to the orders of Alláh Ta'álá. They lived as bondsmen of Alláh Ta'álá, manifesting their abdiyat all the time. But, are you trying to live with greater taqwá and greater musháhadah than the Nabí (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)? Did he not have children? And, are children born without the agency of a wife? Has this answered your questions and removed your doubts?

Coming back to our original theme: it is apparent that when the question was posed, "Alastu-birabbikum?" in the 'Álame-Mitháq, Alláh Ta'álá did not order us to accept this obvious fact, but we, on our own, accepted it. Having accepted it, we have declared our abdiyat and enslavement, and there is no specific and set duties of a slave: he has to carry out all those tasks that Záte Bárí Ta'álá entrusts to him, whenever he is ordered to do so. To be continuously involved in this, is enslavement.

Ta'lím and Debating

Among the tasks that he has to perform, is the task of ta'lím (learning and teaching). This task has first priority. It is this task that Alláh Ta'álá set Hadhrat Ádam (AS) to work on right at the start, that is, the task related to 'Ilm:

لأ ْ َسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَاعَلَّمَ آدَمَ ا

And He taught Ádam all the names.)2:31(

Alláh Ta'álá taught Hadhrat Ádam (AS) the names of everything (with their attributes and effects). Therefore, the first task of this slave, after coming into this world, is to attain 'Ilm to the extent of necessity. For practical purposes, it is sufficient to learn 'Ilm to the extent of one's needs. However, from the aspect of expertise, there should a group, from within the community of Muslims, who should equip themselves with 'Ilm , not for the purpose of practising on, but in order to provide proof of the truth of Islám in the face of the enemies of Islám.

That is why the mu'minín are victorious in every situation from the aspect of establishing the truth of Islám in debates and academic discussions. If the mu'min has taqwá, then he is victorious in this world as well. If not, then he is victorious at times and defeated at times, but on the day of Qiyámat he will be fully victorious. In actual fact, complete victory is for the mu'minín.

الأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ أَنْتُمُ

You will overcome them if you are (indeed) believers.)3:139(

Therefore, the Sahábah (RA) were victorious in their debates as well, as long as they adopted taqwá in the correct meaning of the word. For example, they were challenged by the kuffár, who tried to mock them by asking, "Your Nabí taught you to pass urine and pass stool as well? He taught you to stand, sit and lie down as well? He taught you to eat and drink as well? He taught you how to live with one another as well? He taught you how to behave in your locality as well as when on a journey?" The Sahábah (RA) replied calmly, "Yes! Before, we were like animals, leading lives of animals. Our Nabí (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) taught us to be human beings in the correct sense. He taught us - and teaches us - everything. It is Alláh Ta'álá Who teaches through His Messenger."

Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has said,

علمني ربي فأحسن تعليمي و أدبني ربي فأحسن تأديبي

"My Rabb taught me and He gave me a beautiful education. My Rabb refined me and gave me a beautiful character."

On another occasion, Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has requested,

اللهم انفعني بما علمتني و علمني ما ينفعني

"O Alláh! Grant me benefit from what You teach me, and teach me that which benefits me."

So, what is the first duty on entering into enslavement? It is to attain 'Ilm to the degree of necessity. The Hadíth Sharíf states,

طلب العلم فريضة على كل مسلم

Seeking of 'Ilm is compulsory on every Muslim.

It has become compulsory (fardh) on every Muslim male and female to attain 'Ilm to the extent of necessity, whether one learns through the medium of Arabic, Fársí or Urdú, using authentic kitábs, or whether one learns by asking the ulema' or by listening carefully whilst sitting in majális. The point is that it not incumbent that one has to study through kitábs. A method is being shown.

What kitábs did the Sahábah (RA) have? Yes, they had one kitáb, the Qur'án Sharíf, which was taught to them by the Nabí of the final era, Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). There were no other kitábs. The Qur'án Sharíf had certain principles laid down in it and Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to elucidate on these, which we call Hadíth Sharíf. There were no other kitábs. At a later period, kitábs came into existence. So, it does not matter whether one learns from kitábs, or by querying verbally or by sitting and listening, but we have to learn. We are responsible and accountable.

As for that person who is immersed completely in studying the Sharí'ah in order to attain expertise, it is not appropriate and worthy that he should involve himself in other work, otherwise there will be shortcomings in one of the two. Another reason is that this person is of royalty and he is engaged in royal work. For a person engaged in royal work, it is not fitting that he should be engaged in other work. This was explained in the example of the government employee who is barred from doing other work while in the employ of the government.

This was the practice of our akábirín that, despite the fact that another task may be very praiseworthy and beneficial, yet they would abstain from it if it were to interfere and cause a fault in their ta'límí tasks. So much so, our buzurg's, knowing very well the importance of sulúk and bai'at, yet they always forbade students from taking bai'at during the period of their studies. Hadhrat Mauláná Rashíd Ahmed Gangohí (RA) did not make bai'at of any student before the student comple ted his studies. The reason for this is that, if his attention is directed in a different direction, it is evident that harm will be caused to his studies.

There is a dire need for one such jamá'at which will serve 'Ilme-Dín exclusively. On this basis there should also be one such jamá'at which is engaged purely in the safeguarding of the Dín and teaching of the Dín.This group can only be the scholars of Dín - the ahle-'Ilm. It is for this reason that those in the madrasah should keep themselves aloof from other activities. Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has said,

إنما بعثت معلما

I have come solely as a teacher.

Therefore, do not call on the ahle-'Ilm, who are engaged in this type of work, to be involved in another direction. Do not lure them with endearing talks to divert them from the lifestyle that they have to that of another lifestyle. They will slip and fall. You will become sinners. So, let them carry on with what they are doing, with full concentration and absorption, to become expert. This applies both to the student of Dín who is completely dedicated to his studies, and to the mudarris who is fully absorbed in teaching. Yes, the one who is only superficially carrying his task, may do as he pleases. Do you understand?

Summary of the Majlis and Du'á

This is a brief explanation being presented to you, of the methodology concerning the episode that took place in the 'Álame-Mitháq, when Alláh Ta'álá asked, "Alastu-birabbikum?" and the reply given, "Qálú balá!" O you who are tálibán-e-tazkiyah of your záhir and your bátin! You should be residing in such an engrossed manner, initially correcting your aqá'id, and also with a'mál-e-sálihah, both záhirah and bátinah, with silence of the tongue and tranquility of the heart, with adherence to the Hanafí school of jurisprudence, and with ikhlás and sidq.

May Alláh Ta'álá bless me and you with everlasting taufíq, with ikhlás and sidq.

MALFÚZÁT OF HADHRAT MAULÁNÁ MUHAMMAD MASÍHULLÁH KHÁN SÁHIB (RA).

[These are extracts from the kitáb "Ma'árif Masíhul-Ummat", compiled by Mauláná Meherbán Alí Barotí Sáhib. This kitáb was compiled from notes he had made during his stay in Jalálábád]

1) There is no such deed (amal) which will be of benefit without 'Ilm: either that deed will not be correct or it may not be accepted (qabúl). However, the opposite, 'Ilm without amal may be of benefit to some degree. For example: 'Ilm of tauhíd will be a means of salvation from the fire.

2) (For a Muslim, as far as tauhíd is concerned,) to maintain one's ímán this much i'tiqád (faith and conviction) is sufficient that Alláh Ta'álá is independent and not in need of others (be-niyáz aur mustagní) and that Alláh Ta'álá did not create even a single atom without wisdom (hikmat).

3) Hadhratwálá (i.e Hadhrat Thánwí) (RA) used to say, "I have noted down the essence and crux of Tasawwuf in just two words: Ittilá' and ittibá'(reporting and back and following instructions). In other words, the muríd should keep on informing his condition absolutely correctly (to his sheikh); and he should carry out the methodology shown by the sheikh without any doubts or misgivings. If he has achieved these, then understand that the sálik is traveling along the Path of sulúk with the correct etiquettes of Taríqat. Such a person will traverse the journey very rapidly. However, if he goes contrary to this - he hides some condition of his, where he will be degraded; and reveals those conditions where he will earn praise so that his sheikh may be overawed by him and appear elevated in his eyes - goodness, how will such a person, who wants to impress his seniors with his own

high status, ever succeed? Such a person is a mutakabbir of the highest order (i.e. he has the highest degree of arrogance), even though he may have the appearance of a sálik. In actual fact, he is a hálik (one who is destroyed). That is why the sálikín need to be cautious, and ask themselves, "Truly, are there shortcomings in me or not?" If there are shortcomings, they should concern themselves with removing these.

4) It is not permissible to place one's life in danger, except in a situation of jihád. For this reason, how can it be permissible to be so excessive in one's ma'málát (daily schedule of 'íbádat) so that one's health is affected? This excess and diminishing may be done in acts which are nawáfil. However, there is no room for excess and diminishing in those categories which the Sharí'ah has set down. or example: A person says, "I feel very elated today. Today I shall perform six rakats of saláh instead of four." On the other hand, he says, "Today I am feeling tired and weak. Come, I shall perform only two rakats instead of four." Can this be correct? Instead of earning thawáb, he will be punished.

5) One's qurb-e-Iláhí (closeness to Alláh Ta'álá) increases with nawáfil. Therefore, besides the specified nawáfil, one should carry out other nawáfil also, so that there may be an increase in one's qurb. The sálik should be concerned all the time on attaining qurb. He should find out which a'máls (deeds) bring about greater qurb, and he should adopt these. These may be the act of namáz, or rozah, or tasbíh and zikr, or sadaqah and charity. However, one should not overdo these to that extent that one's health suffers. One should do abundant a'mál, but stay within the boundaries. It is the view of the Sufís that one cannot attain success without

thrashing the nafs. Dear friends! Just ponder: The seeker of dunyá (materialism) toils excessively in seeking wealth, to the extent that he forgets who he is, whereas dunyá is a perishable item. It is a contemptible and an ignoble item. And you, being a seeker of Mahbúbe-Haqíqí (Alláh Ta'álá) are negligent! What a shame on your condition!

6) There are two closely related words: one is basárat and the other is basírat. The first, basárat, refers to what is ordinarily called "sight", whereas the latter, basírat, refers to the "seeing"by the heart. Because basárat is connected to a physical quality, it can only view physical items. On the other hand, basírat, seeing it is connected to something that is metaphysical - the Rúh - it can visualise non-physical items. When basírat develops in a person, the person is drawn towards zikr. Uneasy disappears and there is a diminishing of difficulties. The reason being that the person's gaze is now on Haqá'iq (Divine truths or realities).

7) In the opinion of the muhaqqaqín sages, a special striving (making mujáhadah) in attaining objectives (maqásid) is beneficial and a basis for reward (thawáb). However, making mujáhadah in the means to the objectives is merely undertaking and tolerating hardships. For example: Namáz is an objective. If a person were to bear heat and cold in order to perform his namáz, then he will definitely get thawáb. Say it is winter season and one is sitting covered warmly in a blanket. It is time for namáz but one does not feel like going to the masjid. However, taking into account the importance of namáz, the importance of namáz with jamá'at and the virues of performing namáz in the masjid, one bears the hardship of going in the cold and one performs one's namáz in the masjid, this effort is termed mujáhadah,

for which there will be a reward. On the other hand, take wudhú - this is not an objective in itself but a means to the objective. If one were to undertake difficulties in making wudhú for no valid reason, then this will not be termed mujáhadah. For example, it is winter and hot water is available, but this person makes wudhú with cold water; or there is water available, but this person walks one or two miles to fetch water. So, in these instances the appearance is that of mujáhadah and ordinary people can be deceived. In reality, this is not mujáhadah There is no promise of reward in undertaking these difficulties.

7) Some buzurgs appear to have undertaking great difficulties in carrying out tasks that are not objectives. However, these are not undertaken with the intention of thawáb. These difficulties are undertaken as a means of treating one's nafs. There is a story of one buzurg: His nafs desired to eat some halva (a sweetmeat). Initially, he forbade his nafs, saying "O nafs! I don't have money for halva, and to beg from others is disgraceful." When his nafs would not listen and persisted, he finally said, "Very well. Come, I shall feed you halva." A little way farther he came across a miller milling doing some milling with an ox driving the milling stone. He approached the miller and asked, "Brother, if I were to grind your grain till this evening, instead of the ox, what will you pay me?" An amount was agreed on and he then did the work of the ox till the evening. With the money that he received, he bought some halvah and presented it to his nafs, "Here my son, have some halva." His nafs was contrite, "Please forgive me. I will not make this mistake again in future!"

[Note: When the nafs insisted on eating halva, which was a luxury item, for which he had no money, the buzurg decided to teach his nafs a lesson. He did this getting his nafs to toil and sweat in order to earn the necessary money for the halva. With the legitimately earned money, halva could now be bought. However, taking into account the hard labour an toil, and also the disgrace of having to toil like an ox, was not worth it just to satisfy a craving for a luxury item like halva.]

APPENDIX

AL-HIDÁYAH

Al-Hidáyah ("The Guidance")does not need an introduction to those following the Hanafí school of jurisprudence. It was compiled by Sheikhul Islám Burhánuddín Abul-Hasan Alí Ibne Abí-Bakr Al-Falghání, who was born in Marghinání, Transoxania (between Bukhara and Samarkand, present day Uzbekistan), in 511 A.H. He commenced writing the kitáb in 573 A.H and it took him thirteen years to compile it. He kept rozah everyday that he wrote the kitáb.

It is a kitáb of Hanafí fiqh of outstanding depth and is the standard kitáb to which all the Hanafí ulema' refer. As a basic textbook, it is taught in all the Dárul-Ulúms.

The point that the reader's attention is being drawn to is the fact that the English admitted that they would not have been able to administer the British colonies, and especially the Asian ones, were it not for the fact that they had recourse to this kitáb, Al-Hidáyah. This was mentioned to us by our Sheikh, Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib (RA), during the course of a majlis. To substantiate this, a little bit of research revealed some very interesting facts.

In order to understand the role Al-Hidáyah, played in the administration of the British Empire, it is necessary first to understand the historical and political background of the colonial expansion of England.

Historical Background - The English East India Company

This company was given its charter by Queen Elizabeth I of England in the year 1600. It established "trading posts" in various Asian territories. Invariably, these colonial companies had military and naval forces to "protect" their interests. At that time there were other European colonial countries besides England - Spain, France, Holland and Portugal notably - vying with one another for the lucrative trade with the Asian countries in the East, with the result that there were many battles between them, on land and sea. The English East India Company finally won over the other countries, mainly the Dutch, but also the French and Portuguese, and transformed England's trade routes into a vast colonial empire over a period of one hundred and fifty years, becoming a mighty political and military force.

In 1689 it established administrative districts in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in the Indian subcontinent.

Warren Hastings (1732-1818)

He was the son of an Anglican clergyman and was educated in Westminster, London. At the age of 18 he decided to go to India as a clerk for the English East India Company. He was a brilliant administrator and he rapidly shot through the ranks of the company, serving on the administrative boards of Calcutta and

Madras. In 1772 he was appointed to the most important post of the governorship of Bengal. In the following year, the English government curtailed the power of the Company, but appointed Warren Hastings as the first Governor General of India.

While in Bengal and afterwards, Warren Hastings introduced far-reaching administrative, financial and judicial reforms. This point is very important and it brings us to our subject, Al-Hidáyah.

Warren Hastings and Al-Hidáyah

We do not know much about Warren Hastings relationship with Muslims, but it is apparent that he was a very intelligent person and a keen observer and statesman. He must have been in close contact with Muslims and came to know of the importance of Islámic jurisprudence and of the kitáb, Al-Hidáyah. This much is evident from the fact that he enlisted the services of some scholars to translate the Al-Hidáyah into Persian from the Arabic.

Introductory Address

The introductory address of the translator who translated Al-Hidáyah from the Arabic into Persian gives us some insight into the great effort that was made to make this kitáb available to the English.

After praising Alláh Ta'álá and sending salutations on Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), his family and the Companions, he goes on to state,

"...it is impressed - that, from the day that the delightful region of Bengal was cheered by the rays of Government by the Nawab Governor General, Mr. Warren

Hastings, the whole of his wise and prudent attention was occupied and directed to this point - that the case and protection of the country, and the administration of public affairs, should be placed on such a footing, that the community being sheltered from the scorching heat of violence and tyranny, might find the gates closed against injustice and oppression; and that the range of sedition in those who deviate from the road of truth might be limited and shortened:- and since this hope must be fulfilled through the influence of the holy Law of the Prophet, and the injunctions and inhibitions of the chosen sect - this denizen of kingdom of humility and solitude, named Ghulam Yehee, was therefore instructed and empowered, together with Molla Taj-addeen, Meer Mohammed Hossein and Molla Shareeat Oolla, to translate from the Arabic language into the Persian idiom certain treaties upon the Law, but particularly that excellent work, the Hedaya...."

It is apparent that, besides the Al-Hidáyah, other works were also translated into Persian by the translator. There is no date attached to this introduction by the translator, but it is definitely done while Warren Hastings was Governor in Bengal, before he assumed the Governorship of the whole of India.

Dedication

It appears that the Persian translation was then used to do a translation into English. This was done by Charles Hamilton, who dedicated the English translation to Warren Hastings in the following terms:

"To Warren Hastings, Esq.

Late Governor General of Bengal

"Sir, - After the labour of several years, I am at last enabled to present you with a translation of the Hedaya.

"To you, Sir, I feel it incumbent on me to inscribe a word originally projected by yourself, and for some time carried on under your immediate patronage, - However humble the translator's abilities, and however imperfect the execution of these volumes may be, yet the design itself does honour to the wisdom and benevolence by which it was suggested; and if I might be allowed to express a hope upon the subject, it is, that its future beneficial effects, in facilitating the administration of Justice throughout our Asiatic territories and uniting us still more closely with Our Mussulman subjects, may reflect some additional lustre on your Administration, - I have the honour to be, with the utmost respect, and the most lively gratitude and esteem, Sir, your most obedient, and humble servant,

CHARLES HAMILTON."

It appears that this project was extremely successful. How much of the laws from Al-Hidáyah were put into practical application, is something that is open for some keen researcher to discover. However, what is very evident is that this translation became indispensable to the English in their administration of the Asian colonies.

Advertisement to the Second Edition

Proof of this is given in the "Advertisement to the Second Edition" by Standish Grove Grady, written for the legal profession. I quote:

"...I now present to the profession the Second Edition of the Hedaya. As this work has been made a textbook by the Council of Legal Education, for the examination of the students of the Inns of Court, who are qualifying themselves for the call to the English Bar, with a view to practicing in India..."

The emphasis is mine. From this, it is obvious that the translated version of Al-Hidáyah had become so important that, by the year 1980, when this second edition was printed, it had already become a textbook for lawyers to study in order to pass their examinations and practice law! Not only did Grady think it suitable for students only, but his vision was much wider. He ends his "Advertisement to the Second Edition" as follows:

"Although the present Edition has been published with a view of assisting the student to prosecute his studies, yet the hope is entertained that the Judge, as well as the Practitioner, will find it useful, particularly in those provinces where Mahommedan demands a great portion of the attention of the judiciai, as well as that of the practitioner. It is hoped, also, that it may be found useful in promoting the study of the law in the several Universities in India, it being advisable to assimilate the curriculum in both countries as much as possible.

2, Plowden Buildings, Temple. April 1870.

Standish Grove Grady."

[Quotations are from "The Hedaya, commentary on the Islamic Laws", translated by Charles Hamilton, published by Nusrat Ali Nasri, for Kitab Bhavan, New Delhi, India.1979]

Chapter No.:

21

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A LECTURE AND A MAJLIS

A BRIEF NOTE ON BROTHER HASSIM BULBULIA (RA)

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Masihullah Khan Sahib (RA) was born in Sarai Barlah in the district of Aligarh in the year 1329 or1330 Hijri (1911/1912 CE). Hadhrat's (RA) lineage is linked to the noble Sharwani family of landed nobility, and being linked to Sayyid Hussain Ghauri (RA), the lineage is also Sayyid. Hadhrat (RA) attended the local government school up to standard six, but did not continue with his secular education, preferring to study Din, which he studied initially in his hometown and, thereafter, completing his studies in Deoband. Hadhrat (RA) became bay'at to Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib Thanwi (RA), from whom Hadhrat (RA) received his Khilafat. This was in the same year that Hadhrat (RA) qualified from Deoband.

Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi Sahib (RA) stationed Hadhrat (RA) in Jalalabad, where Hadhrat (RA) established a madrasah, Miftahul-Ulum, and a khanqah. Salikin who came to Jalalabad for their self-rectification would stay in the khanqah. Hadhrat (RA) passed away in Jalalabad in the early hours of Friday, on the 17th Jamadul-Ula 1413 Hijri. (14th November 1992).

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Dr. Ismail Mangera

P. O. Box 96185

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South Africa

Telephone: (+27) 011 837-5736

E-mail: imangera@cybertrade.co.za

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بِسْمِ اللهِّ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيم

FOREWORD

Alhamdulillah, with the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of our Sheikh (RA) and the du'as of our well-wishers, this booklet, For Friends Number Nineteen, is being presented to you.

This majlis has been translated from the tape obtained from Hassim's Tape Library. This majlis was conducted in 1983 at the residence of Haji Ebrahim (Bhai) Dadabhay in Roshnee, South Africa. Brother Hassim Bulbulia (RA) used to record our Hadhrat's (RA) majalis and distribute the tapes through the tape library that he had established. (Refer to page 57.)

This was our Hadhrat's (RA) last visit to South Africa. His first visit to South Africa was in 1971. How did Hadhrat (RA) come to visit South Africa? This is a bit of a long story, which will be narrated very briefly over here.

Maulana Ismail Kathrada Sahib, who, at the moment, is running running a madrasah in Vryheid, provided the following information: He - Maulana Ismail

Kathrada Sahib - had been studying in Verulum under the tutelage of Hadhrat Munshi Sahib (who went to stay in Inanda later). After completing his hifz, Maulana Ismail Kathrada Sahib, upon recommendation by Maulana Omarjee (RA), was sent by his parents to Deoband Darul-Ulum in 1957 to become an 'alim.

One day in the year 1962, while at the station in Deoband, he was told that there was a very pious person, the principal of the madrasah in Jalalabad at the station as well. It turned out that Hadhratji (RA) - meaning Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Masihullah Khan Sahib - was waiting to purchase a ticket to go to Saharanpur. Seeing that the queue was rather long, Maulana Kathrada Sahib offered to stand in the queue and buy a ticket for Hadhratji (RA). This he did. Hadhratji (RA) invited him to come to visit him in Jalalabad. Maulana Kathrada Sahib was still studying at Deoband and could not go at that time.

However, Maulana Kathrada Sahib was planning to go to a place called Hazarah, near Peshawar in Pakistan, for tarawih. He had been there previously at the request of his parents, whose ustadhs hailed from there. On the way to Hazarah he stopped in Jalalabad to meet Hadhratji (RA). While there he discussed with Hadhratji (RA) his plans for further studies and Hadhratji (RA) suggested that he came to Jalalabad to complete his studies. Maulana Kathrada Sahib did just that in 1963. His parents and family members were most upset. In the first place, they were not happy that he had gone to a place like Deoband, and going to Jalalabad appeared to them to be even worse. Maulana Kathrada Sahib wrote a long letter to them to explain what Jalalabad was and who Hadhratji (RA) was. His parents took the letter to Maulana Kathrada Sahib's ustadh, Hadhrat Munshi Sahib, who read the letter and reassured his parents concerning Jalalabad and Hadhratji (RA). Later

Hadhrat Munshi Sahib himself came to Jalalabad and became bay'at to Hadhratji (RA). In this way, others came to know of Hadhratji (RA).
Efforts then commenced by Hadhrat Munshi Sahib and the family members of Maulana Ismail Kathrada Sahib to bring Hadhratji (RA) to South Africa. Hadhratji (RA) was in England at the time. Problems were encountered in obtaining a visa because of the laws of the apartheid government in South Africa. However, through the good services of Haji Ebrahim Abramjee Sahib of Laudium, a visa was finally obtained. Thus, Hadhratji (RA) made his first trip to South Africa in 1971. Hadhratji (RA) came to South Africa again in the years 1975/6, 1978/9 1981/2 and 1983. Thereafter, many people invited him back, but due to other commitments and ill health, he was unable to come. Allah Ta'ala willed that more work be taken from him by him remaining in Jalalabad and people from all over coming to meet him there.
Dr.I.M.

[This is a translation of a majlis conducted by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Masihullah Khan Sahib (RA) in Roshnee, South Africa, at the residence of Ebrahim (Bhai) Dadabhay Sahib in the year 1983.]

Blessings of the Quran Sharif
...Bismillah is to be found here. In fact, there is need for Bismillah at every time and on every occasion and is necessary initially and in the very beginning. There is greatness in the Kalam of Allah Ta'ala, that being the Qur'an Sharif. Allahu-akbar! And with what does it start? It starts with Bismillah - Bismilla-hir-Rahman-nirrahim. Then comes "Al-hamdu-lillah".

On what is hamd (praise) recited? It is on ne'mats (blessings). When is hamd recited? When we show gratitude to Allah Ta'ala. We will say "Al-hamdulillah". Furthermore, there is no greater blessing than the Kalam of Allah Ta'ala, the Qur'an Sharif.

The whole basis of life, the whole of life's functioning, with its peace, with its comforts, with its luxuries, with its happiness, with its cheer, in this world as well as the hereafter - which is our original home from which we had been sent, i.e. Jannat - the basis of all aspects of our lives in this dunya and the akhirat, is the Qur'an Sharif, the Kalam of Allah Ta'ala.

The Qur'an Sharif contains in it the teachings of the Taurah, it has the teachings of the Injil in it, it has the teachings of the Zabur in it, it has in it the kitab and scriptures revealed to Hadhrat Ibrahim (AS), it has in it the scriptures revealed to Hadhrat Musa (AS), which are in addition to the Taurah. That is not to say that all the teachings from these scriptures are in the Qur'an Sharif. Those which have been abrogated are not included. These were subject matters meant for those times, and these were laws meant for those respective times. However, those teachings and laws that were meant to be still applicable, are all to be found in the Qur'an Sharif. Those laws that were revealed by wahi in the Qur'an Sharif by Allah Ta'ala and which He did not want to preserve, were abrogated.

مَا نَنسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلِهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

Such of Our revelations as We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring (in place) one better or the like thereof. Knowest thou not that Allah is able to do all things? S.2 A.106

"That wahi which We had revealed previously, were appropriate at those times.

We have removed these, We have removed them from the chest, and We have replaced them through wahi with something better and We have established them till the day of Qiyamat."

Differences in status

It shows that there is a difference between one type of wahi and another. In the same way there is a difference between one Rasul and another.

سُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍتِلْكَ الرُّ

Of those Messengers, some of whom We have caused to excel others S.2 A.253

This indicates that not every Rasul is equal to another Rasul. Similarly, the wahi that was revealed to whichever Rasul is not equal to another wahi. In the former case, both are Rasuls and in the latter case, both are the Kalam of Allah Ta'ala, but they are not all equal.

This being the case, then taking a group other then the Rasuls, that is, the Sahabah (RA), they are also not all equal. Their statements also are not equal.

Let us go a step further down and take the group that come after the Sahabah (RA), these being the Auliya: they are also not all equal to one another. Their statements are also not equal.

Let us go a step further down still and take the group of general mu'minin: they are also not all equal and their statements are also not all equal. This being the case, then their actions are also not all equal.

Dunya likened to carrion

Let us go still lower. The lowest section after akhirat is dunya. Dunya has two meanings. The one means "lowest of the low" - disgraced to the utmost degree.

This humiliated condition of dunya is likened to the carcass of a dead animal.

الـــدنيا جيفـــة و طالبوهـــا كـــلاب

Allah Ta'ala states that the dunya is like a carcass. Do not become one desirous of it. Allah Ta'ala has likened a person desirous of dunya to a dog.

(The intial part of this statement appears in the Hadith Sharif and the latter part of it has been attributed to Hahdrat Ali (RA))

Therefore, a Muslim should never refer to himself as a dunyadar. It is unbefitting of him, with his own tongue, to say that he is a dunyadar. The reason is that a dunyadar has been likened to a dog by Allah Ta'ala, so how can he call himself a dog? But you will find that people coming for du'a and one tells them, "You make du'a yourself. One who is afflicted himself knows the anguish he is going through." The reply given is, "We are the dogs of this world. Please make du'a for us." So, if they themselves refer to themselves as dogs, so why should there be an objection if the buzurg, whose qissah has been related, calls him a dog?

The story, related to us by Hadhratwala (RA) [Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA)] goes as follows:

A buzurg had a female dog. She gave birth to puppies. As I had mentioned just now, while we were walking, that it is permissible to keep dogs for hunting, for shepherding goats and cattle, and for protection of one's fields or house. The condition is that they should stay out of the house. The reason being that, where there are dogs, the angels of mercy do not come. So it is not correct to keep dogs in the house - one is chasing away mercy (of Allah Ta'ala) by doing so. Similarly, that house that has pictures (of animate objects) in it, the angels of mercy do not enter

such a house. The angels of mercy have an aversion for dogs or pictures of animate objects.

Munasabat leads to bonding

Now, Hadhrat Jibra'il (AS) used to come to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) with wahi, as we know. Besides these occasions, he also used to come on other occasions to meet Rasulullah (RA). There developed a friendship between the two. There was a tremendous amount of munasabat (congeniality) between the two, unmatched to the munasabat with the other angels.

Wherever there is congeniality between temperaments, friendship develops. One will find grass-cutters will have friendship with fellow grass-cutters, wrestlers with fellow wrestlers, cinema-goers with cinema-goers, drinkers with fellow drinkers. This is because of munasabat.

So also, the Allahwala will develop friendship with the Allahwala, to the degree of wanting to be an Allahwala in the person's temperament. Pay attention to this and let me repeat: The degree of friendship with the Allahwala will be to the degree of the desire in the heart to be an Allahwala - to that degree will there be friendship with the Allahwala. Some will have a small desire, others a greater desire and others still, a tremendous desire. So, some will meet the Allahwala only occasionally. Others will want to be with them all the time. The desire in them is so much that they wander around searching all the time for the Allahwala, and upon finding them, they will cling on to them and will not leave them. This is so because they have developed a deep bond with the Allahwala - they have developed munasabat with the Allahwala.

This bonding is seen in our tablighi brothers. Those who are doing the work of tabligh and have done so consistently for a long period, have developed such a bond with the effort of tabligh that they will be involved with the work of tabligh all the time, being with others involved in the work of tabligh and sitting with them. When they sit anywhere, their conversation will also revolve around tabligh. They will not speak on any other topics. Also, when they deliver a bayan at an ijtima' they will speak on tabligh according to their own methodology and will not discuss any other aspects of tabligh.

Whereas it is acknowledged that Din is a combination of two items: ma'mur-biha and manhi-anha. In other words, the first is to bring into practice that we have been ordered to do - ma'mur-biha - and secondly, those actions which we have been ordered to abstain from - manhi-anha. These are the two aspects: one to carry out and one to abstain from. The combination of these two is called Din. Do you understand?

The Kalimah Sharif & ma'mur-biha and manhi-anha

How does one know this? (By the taufiq of Allah Ta'ala this comes to mind.) We know this from the Kalimah Sharif. It is from the Kalimah Sharif that one can deduce that Din has two categories, one is ma'mur-biha and the other is manhi-anha.

How do we deduce this? There is not need to go to great lengths or to overwork the mind. The problem is that we have discarded taking work from our intelligence in the proper manner. So, how can correct ideas come into one's mind? How can correct concepts enter?

Take the whole of Din, all those volumes of kitabs that have been written full of all the ahkam (laws of Din), all of them are explanations of La-ilaha-illallah, exegeses of La-ilaha-illallah, both of ma'mur-biha and manhi-anha. The commentary of it, of La-ilaha-illallah, is Muhammadur-Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). That is why Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is called "Shareh-Islam" (Commentator of Islam) and "Share'-Islam" (one who detailed the Shari'at of Islam) and not "Bani-Islam" (founder of Islam). Who founded Islam? Islam was not founded or formulated by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) but by Allah Ta'ala. When some say that Islam was founded by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), it is said metaphorically and not in reality. In reality it is Allah Ta'ala who laid the foundations of Islam. The terms Shareh and Share' mean, one who shows the road and one who portrays something in all its aspects, to the minutest detail respectively. That is why Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is called "Shareh-Islam" and "Share'-Islam". Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had no right to create the laws of Islam. He had the duty of explaining the laws, according to what Allah Ta'ala wanted.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ

Then lo! Upon Us (restesth) the explanation thereof. S.75 A.19

What is this "bayanah"? It is to fully explain something, to open it up. Allah Ta'ala is saying, "We will cause our Kalam, which has appeared in a concise form, very briefly, in the form of laws, to be expounded openly and fully through your lips." Therefore, what Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has said is also "Qur'an", the difference being that the words of Allah Ta'ala being revealed in the form of the kitab, the Qur'an Sharif, are made tilawat of, whereas the "Qur'an" of

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is not made tilawat of. The wahi that forms the Qur'an Sharif is referred to as matlu', whereas the words uttered by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) are gair-matlu' and referred to as Hadith Sharif. This is an explanation of the Qur'an Sharif. No tilawat is made of the Hadith Sharif. And the basis of all this is La-ilaha-illallah.

Nafi-ithbat - Negation & Affirmation

As I was saying, there are two categories to Din, namely ma'mur-biha and manhi-anha, which are derived from La-ilaha-illallah. La-ilaha is negation (nafi). Illallah is affirmation (ithbat). La-ilaha means that there is no deity, no objective, no purpose, no loved one and, in reality, no existence. In reality, none even existing. We may appear to be existing as we can see one another walking and speaking, but did we exist before?

هَلْ أَتَىٰ عَلَى الإِنسَانِ حِينٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُن شَيْئًا مَّذْكُورًا

Hath there come upon man (ever) any period of time in which he was a thing unremembered? S.76 A.1

Man had such a phase that he was not even mentioned - he was non-existent. Subsequently, Allah Ta'ala brought into existence man by creating him. Finally, man will cease to exist in the dunya.

So, not existing in the dunya in the beginning and then, in the end, also passing into non-existence, then how can one say that he is existing? When the two terminals are non-existent - the beginning and the end - then what type of existence is the intermediate phase? So, in reality, man has no existence. Then, the only existence, in reality, is that of Allah Ta'ala. Have you now understood the meaning

of La-ilaha?

It does not mean that there is absolutely no entity worthy of worship at all. The literal and initial portion is that there is none worthy of worship. If there is none in existence except Him then, it follows, that only He is worthy of worship. The question arises: Why should He be worshipped? The answer is that the One Who is worthy of worship should have all the qualities for the needs of the creation to the highest degree of perfection, to the extent that there is just no possibility at all of any deficiency arising in them. These qualities are in Him. If you take'ilm (knowledge), He has this quality to that degree; if you take qudrat (power), it is to that degree; if you take iradah (resolve), it is to that degree; to be able to create a formulary for the kingdom He rules without any fear, he has this as well to that degree; to cause harm, it is to that degree; to cause benefit, it is to that degree; to grant honour, it is to that degree; to cause disgrace, it is to that degree. So, honour is in His hands and disgrace is in His hands; wealth is in His hands and poverty is in His hands; illness is in His hands and good health is in His hands; complete and full power is in His hands; complete and perfect 'ilm is in His hands; enforcement of any and all actions is in His hands. These are qualities not found in anything else to that degree. He is the One to provide wind, to provide water, to provide rizq, and so forth. One who has all these qualities has all the right to be worshipped. Anybody who does not have these qualities has no right to be worshipped. La-ilaha has negated everything else.

This is why, if a person just keeps on repeating La-ilaha and remains firm on this and does not add illallah, he has become a kafir! The reason is that he has negated everything - that there is none worthy of worship and that there is none as one's

objective - and thereby negated even Allah Ta'ala! So, after the nafi there must be added the ithbat. First is the non-existence of everything else and then the existence of Allah Ta'ala. One has negated the right of worship from the whole creation and then affirmed the worship of Allah Ta'ala in absolute terms. After that comes affirmation - ithbat, that is illallah.

So, la-ilaha has nafi in it and illallah has ithbat in it. So, la-ilaha has manfi in it and illallah has muthbat in it, and manhi-anha is manfi and ma'mur-biha is muthbat. Do you understand the point made? So, la-ilaha denotes manhi-anha and illallah denotes ma'mur-biha. The combination of the two - manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha is Din. Possibly this is the first time you have heard it explained in this manner, by the taufiq of Allah Ta'ala.

To explain it again: La-ilaha is negating (nafi) and illallah is affirming (ithbat). So, la-ilaha will include all that is manhi-anha and illallah will include all that is ma'mur-biha. Din is comprised of two categories, manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha - that which we have to abstain from and that which we have to carry out respectively. When both manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha are lectured on and when both these are acted on, then this will be considered to be acting on the perfection of Din. If only one category is taken up and the other category left out, how can this be called perfection in Din?

Importance of parhez

That was the first point. Another point: Both, according to common knowledge and according to the statements of the hakims and doctors, there is one important aspect to consider. Let me illustrate it: You will find a friend telling his friend, out

of concern for his welfare, "What is this that I see you running to the doctor every now and then, forever drinking medicines?" The friend replies, "Why, what is wrong with that?" His friend advises, "Dear brother, you should go on a parhez as well. Abstain from eating those items that are harmful to you. I know that you are very fond of tea, but tea for you, at present, with the ailments you have, is harmful." Parhez - dietary restriction - is the important aspect of treating a patient. Even doctors agree on it.

Is that not so? [This was addressed to a person sitting in the majlis.] He is not speaking. Did you not have breakfast? Did anybody see whether he was sitting at the dastarkhan at breakfast time? Nobody was looking. Good. One should not be looking at people when they are eating.

Etiquettes of Eating

Let me digress. This is a majlis, so whatever topic crops up, well and good. Whoever it applies to will benefit.

This we heard from Hadhratwala (RA): Hadhrat Mu'awiyah (RA) is a Sahabi and is one of the more prominent ones, is that not so? People have created doubts for no reason about his status. He had some guests whom he was feeding. Among the guests was an Arabi. The peasant bedouins staying in the surrounds of Madinah Tayyibah were called "Arabi". He was also there, eating with the other guests. It so happened that, by chance, Hadhrat Mu'awiyah's (RA) gaze fell on him. Being a peasant, he was eating in his own fashion, placing big pieces of roti in his mouth. We would break a roti into eight pieces. He was breaking them into only two large pieces and eating them. Hadhrat Mu'awiyah (RA) told him, "You are eating such

big pieces? It is not good to eat such large pieces." The bedouin retorted, "It is not befitting that honourable people should sit and eat at your dastarkhan. You are keeping a watch on our mouths?"

Firstly, the etiquette is that one should not watch another person eating. Have you now come to know the mas'alah? Some have the habit of staring at others to see how they are eating. People look at others to see how they are eating. This is incorrect.

Secondly, one should also take into consideration the following situation: a person is sitting and eating and there is nobody sitting with him. You do not have an informal and open relationship with him. Do not go and sit next to him to eat, the reason being that he is now going to feel shy and he will not eat properly because of your presence. He feels uncomfortable because the relationship between him and you is not a relaxed one. One should not go and sit there, but many just go and sit. Many dindar people are unaware of this mas'alah.

These are masa'il of the dastarkhan. Masa'il are of different categories: individual (infradi), collective (ijtima'i) and grouped (jamati).

Thirdly, if a person is involved in some 'ilmi work, for example he is reading a kitab, then another person should not unnecessarily go and sit next to him. If there is some need, then he should approach the person and tell him that he has something to discuss with him. Otherwise, he should not go and sit near him. If he does, it will disturb this person and cause an interference in his reading of the kitab. Similarly, if a person is busy writing a letter, he should not look to see what he is writing. Looking at him writing will cause a certain anxiety in the writer, and he will not say anything either. If he has some work he should approach him, state

his work and go away. Similarly, one should not go and sit next to a person who is eating. If there is some urgent work, one should approach the person and tell him so. These are masa'il, infradi, ijtima'i and jamati

To continue the qissah concerning the bedouin guest of Hadhrat Mu'awiyah (RA): He had retorted, "It is not befitting that honourable people should sit and eat at your dastarkhan. You are keeping a watch on our mouths?" He stopped eating and stood up to leave. Hadhrat Mu'awiyah (RA) apologised profusely and begged him to sit and finish his meal, but the bedouin did not accept his apology and he left.

Taqwa and Ibadat

Let us now go back to the previous topic of parhez, manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha. Even the doctor will tell the patient to abstain from those foods which are harmful. Medication will come afterwards. As for sequence, parhez comes first and medication afterwards. Parhez means to leave aside, to stop. From here we can see that taqwa comes first and ibadat comes afterwards.

What do we call ibadat? What does it mean, both in common usage and as far as the Shari'at is concerned? Take an example: if a person is making just his five-times namaz, would he be called a great abid? Nobody will say so. Now, take somebody who is making his five-times namaz, together with the nafl that go with them and, in addition, he is performing other nafl namazes like Ishraq, Chast, the nafl before zawal, Awwabin and Tahajjud. Not only that, but he stays awake half the night in ibadat.

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُزَّمِّلُ ﴿﴾ قُمِ اللَّيْلَ إِلاَّ قَلِيلاً ﴿﴾

O thou covered in thy sheet! Keep vigil the night long...S.73 A.1

[Hadhratji stopped speaking at this point and greeted a certain Maulana who had just entered then and who had sat down at the back. Hadhratji honoured him by asking him to come and sit near to him, saying that a white-bearded person is honoured by the black-bearded person, indicating to those sitting in front to make place for him. Hadhratji then digressed from the topic he had been discussing in consideration of the visitor, before going back to the theme he had been discussing. Speaking more to the visitor, but for the attention of all present, Hadhratji said:]

Qualities to seek in companionship

Hadhratwala (RA) used to say, "Let there be merely two people with one, but let them be people of understanding. If there are a hundred people with one, but if they are not people of understanding, then what joy is there?" If one has only one wife, but she is a person of understanding, recognises and accommodates the temperament of her husband, Jannat is made for him! On the other hand, a person has four wives, but they are a burden, it is now dozig for him! The husband will feed all of them, yet...

Hadhratwala (RA) used to say, "I am also insan, I am also human. Who does not wish to have solace in his heart? Look at Hadhrat Adam (AS). He was in Jannat and he was in the mushahadah (view of) of Allah Ta'ala." Being in Jannat and his heart being in mushahadah of Allah Ta'ala, his heart would not have been unoccupied. This was a time before he came to live on earth. Therefore he was free of any cares and worries that would trouble anybody staying here. There was complete sukun in Jannat - tranquillity and peace of mind. Yet, what did he feel? He felt that he was alone and needed companionship. From this, it is apparent that

this feeling is an innate human desire, and that the foundation of this desire stems from there. This desire arose despite being in a place like Jannat and being in a state of mushahadah Haqq.

So, Hadhratwala (RA) used to say, "I am also insan, I am also human. I also desire that one or two should be with me. However, they should be ham-maslak and ham-mazaq - of the same school of thinking and the same tastes. If my maslak is of one type and the maslak of the others is different, there will be misery. If my mazaq is of one type and the mazaq of the others is different, again there will be misery."

Etiquettes of a gathering

What does one do when a person sits with a stony face? His face looks as if the world's problems are on his shoulders. One becomes anxious when one is with such a person. What does one say to him? How does one converse with him? When one speaks to him he does not understand. When something humorous is said, there appears no smile on his face. One does not feel like speaking then.

These are some incidental points that have come in-between. These are some principles of etiquettes of a gathering. If, in a gathering the speaker, during the course of the talk, says something which is of a humorous nature where smiles should appear on the faces of the listeners - not outright loud laughter - and the smiles are not evident, immediately the speaker's heart becomes constrained. The speaker's spirits are dampened. His buoyancy is gone. This is because of the mute attitude of the listener. He sits like an idol. Who can speak to an idol?

Another point: If the speaker is a sahibe-zauq (cultured, refined) - he may not think much of himself but others consider him to be a person of esteem - and a smile

does appear on the face of the listener, the sahibe-zauq will be able to make out if the smile is not genuine, he will still become constrained because the listener's hypocrisy will be exposed. The listener may be sitting there, but he is not sitting happily, with proper faith and confidence (i'timad and i'tiqad). He looks here and there. Sometimes he speaks with this person and then that person. Sometimes he teases this person and then that person. He is sitting, but out of politeness, not for his batini benefit. He is not concerned. He is not interested in progressing. He does not want his temperament to incline towards goodness. Why? The reason is that the 'ilm that he has attained, the deeds he is doing and the concepts he has formed in his mind, he considers these three to be sufficient and correct and he does not consider it to be good for him to go out of this framework. So, whatever he is doing, he is merely deceiving himself and fooling others.

The sahibe-zauq will detect this. Why does the sahibe-zauq not say anything? His temperament is one of kindness, that is why he does not say anything. But, the person will understand even though he is not told anything. By way of example: "Goolam Hoosain understands even though he is not told anything directly." This is said out of muhabbat and whosoever's name comes to the lips is mentioned by way of example only.

You must have studied the kitabs of grammar. The name "Zaid" comes in frequently to illustrate different aspects of grammar. So, listen to this qissah: A simple-minded student came to study at a madrasah. Explaining the noun, verb and object in Arabic grammar, the ustadh said in Arabic, "Zaid hit Amar." The student asked, "Why did Zaid hit Amer?" He was simple in his thinking. The ustadh tried to explain, "Zaid did not hit Amer. This is said as an illustration to understand the

grammar." The student said, "I do not want to study such kitabs in which lies are stated." He had wilayati 'ilm (an extreme type of honesty in the pursuit of 'ilm.) He did not study. Possibly Allah Ta'ala wanted to take some other work from him.

A qissah

Just listen to this humorous incident.

Our Pathan brothers from the nobility, the ra'is, used to say that, finally, one Pathan student, after much difficulty, became an alim. He was a good alim, one of the senior ones, but for some reason or other, he went astray. Some obstinacy developed in him. (In other words, there were no 'alims amongst them and this one hope of the Pathan clan came crashing down!)

Now, one must remember, swords are the toys with which Pathans play and amuse themselves. Take this incident, on a more serious note, that Hadhratwala (RA) related to us. Of course, all what I am relating comes from him. There was in Lucknow a Pathan who did not perform namaz at all. He had passed middle-age. Somebody advised him, "Khansahib, at this stage your legs are dangling in the grave. Start performing your namaz now." Khansahib asked, "Why? Whatever for? What will I receive?" His friend replied, "You will receive Jannat." Khansahib said, "Wah! Jannat is in our hands. One slash over here and another slash over there and one has attained Jannat. What is there to it?"

This is exactly what happened. Near Lucknow, the Hindus attacked a village of the Muslims. The Muslims were few and the Hindus were many. How long could they withstand the attack? The Khansahib from Lucknow, mentioned above, went to a Molvisahib and told him, "The Hindus have attacked the Muslims in a village. If I

go to assist the Muslims, and it could happen that I am killed, will I be a shahid? I am asking because, if I go to assist the Muslims and I get killed, but I am not counted as a shahid, then what is the benefit? I would have attained nothing. I would have given my life for no reason."

He was a person of understanding. He went to enquire. Such "ignorance" is praiseworthy. Nowadays, nobody asks even. Unlike before, people involve themselves in politics and they do not enquire about anything. There is a local saying, "It does not matter. Let him go the scaffold - God will deal kindly with him!" Similarly, the cry is, "Confront them. Fight them." It does not matter what the results are. This is mentioned just incidentally.

To continue: The Maulana said to the Khansahib, "If you were to be killed, you will be a shahid." Satisfied, he went home, had a bath, changed his clothes, took his sword and lance and went to the village which was under attack. He fought valiantly on the side of the Muslims and killed many. But for how long? Finally this Khansahib became shahid.

Hadhratwala (RA) said, "What the Khansahib had said he had demonstrated practically." He did not negate his action but said, "What the Khansahib had said he had demonstrated practically, that one slash over here and another over there and one has attained Jannat."

The Sharwan-Sayyid lineage of Hadhratji (RA)

[The Maulana Sahib who had come a bit late and was now sitting near Hadhratji, asked, "Where did the title Sharwani' originate from?" Hadhratji replied:]

Sharwan is a town in Kabul in Afghanistan. The label of Khan-Sharwani that is

attached to us came about as follows: Our forefathers were of the Sadat (Sayyids - the progeny of Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and came from Arabia. When they came, some had wives, others did not. In those days journeying was by foot. They reached Kabul, in Afghanistan, and stayed there for a very long time. The nation of Pathans used to honour the Sayyids tremendously, irrespective of the person's qualities. The mere fact of him being a Sayyid was sufficient to honour him. Also, it comes in the kitabs that, if there is any doubt about a person being a Sayyid, respect and honour him even more! Why? If somebody is a Sayyid from the lineage of both parents, the mother and the father, then you yourself will respect them. However, if somebody claims to be a Sayyid and there has arisen a doubt for no reason whatsoever, then you should respect him even more.

So, the Pathans used to respect and honour the Sayyids a tremendous amount. The people of Kabul welcomed them with open arms. Among them were young unmarried men as well. When they married, they did so locally, seeing that they had been there for some time.

In time to come, when they left Afghanistan, their lineage was traced to the nearest relatives, these being the father and grandfather. This normally happens. One does not go back to the generations before that, the great-grandfather and others before him. Seeing that the immediate family came from Sharwan, the family came to be known as Sharwani.

Very interestingly, once, when I was in Pakistan right in the north, on the border of Afghanistan, one evening I was taking a walk. My host was with me. While walking, my eyes fell on a milestone. These are stones along the road to indicate the distance to various places, as we see here in India as well. This milestone had

written on it "Sharwan". I asked my host, "How does the name Sharwan appear here?" He explained that this was the road to Kabul and the sign indicated the direction to Sharwan in Kabul.

When the family came to India, seeing that they had come from Kabul in Afghanistan, which was famous as being the land of the Pathans, the family came to be known as Pathan, but we are Sayyid. We are Sayyid from the paternal side and Pathan from the maternal side. The maternal Pathan side was remembered when the family came to India, but the paternal Sayyid side was forgotten. So, that is our ancestral history, both Sayyid and Pathan, but Sayyid in reality, because in the Shari'at, lineage is based on the paternal lineage and not the maternal lineage.

Who is an abid?

Let us go back to our previous theme. We were discussing being an abid. Somebody who is performing just his five-times namazes will not be called an abid. An abid will be that person who performs additional nafl ibadat in addition to the five namazes - that is, nafl namaz, nafl tilawat, nafl fasting, nafl zikr. He stays awake at night in ibadat, performing his Tahajjud namaz. He also performs the namazes of Ishraq, Chast, Zawal and Awwabin. Whenever you see him he has the Qur'an Sharif open in front of him, busy with tilawat. Come the days of the 13th, 14th and 15th of the month, the Ayyame-Bis, he is fasting. He also keeps the nafl fasts of Muharram, Shaban and Zil-Hajj. It is as if he is a "qa'imul-layl" and "sa'imud-dahr" (one who stays up the whole night in ibadat and fasts everyday). He will be called an abid.

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُزَّمِّلُ ﴿١﴾

"O thou covered in a sheet/ blanket!"

(Mudath-thir refers to clothes, and appears elsewhere.) Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was feeling grieved at something and this ayet was revealed on that occasion. By this form of address Allah Ta'ala is saying, AThe manner in which you are being addressed is to indicate goodness towards you, that this manner of My addressing you is to bring to you sukun, a connection, a heartfelt attachment, tranquillity and focussing of your attention towards Me.

"Where have you lied down, immersed in your grief? How can you lie down in grief just because of what somebody had said? Stand up." It was night time. Analysing this surah, Surah Muzammil Sharif, we can see that it has Tasawwuf in it through and through, from the very beginning to the end.

Remedy for grief

We can deduce that when a Muslim is grieved, that some sadness has affected him - which is bound to happen now and then, sometimes light, at other times heavy, sometimes big and at other times small - he should not focus his attention in that direction, or else his grief will increase. Yes, if he has the passion to deliberately increase his grief, then nobody has any cure for such a person. He is like that person who has a taste for eating poison and is munching away at some strychnine, and you are trying to help him and you try snatching the poison away from him, but he repulses you. Such incidents have occurred.

A qissah

What I am going to relate to you is a known incident which happened in front of me. There was a youth who, for some reason or other, found it difficult living in

his community. He had a harsh temperament. He used to quarrel and hurl abuse and fight with each and everybody. Yet, he came from a good home, a noble family. He developed an illness of his eyes. It became so severe that the fear came into him, "I will become blind!" He then started having more fears (waswasah). "If I were to become blind, considering my atrocious behaviour with my family members and others, who will care for a blind person like me? My life will be devastated. Neither will my family care for my comfort because of my loose tongue and misbehaviour, nor will members of the community care for me, because I was abusive to them." So, he found it burdensome to live.

He went to his brother, who owned a firearm. "May I borrow your gun? I am thinking of going hunting. Load the cartridge and give it to me." The brother did so and handed it over to him, knowing that he was a keen hunter.

He brought the gun home. His mother saw the gun in his hand and asked him, "What is the gun for?" His wife also saw him with the gun and she also asked, "What is the gun for?" He did not reply, but went with the gun straight into his room. Both his mother and wife got worried. Something was not right. They went after him but he had locked the door. They both pleaded with him to open the door and let them in so that they could take the gun from him, but he was set firm on his plan.

His behaviour was like that of Shaitan, who had set his mind on disobeying Allah Ta'ala, even though Allah Ta'ala had tried to make him understand. Allah Ta'ala had addressed Shaitan directly, without any intermediary, yet he refused to understand.

This boy's mother and his wife kept on pleading with him, trying to make him

understand and see reason. However, when somebody has resolved firmly on a course of action, then even if Allah Ta'ala were to explain to him, he will not understand. How will he understand the explanations of ordinary people like us? So, he did not listen to either his mother or his wife.

When in the room, he took the gun and placed the barrel over his heart and pulled the trigger with his thumb, shooting himself through the heart. He died on the spot. Why have I mentioned this? In order to explain that nobody is free of grief befalling him or her. Big or small, light or heavy, grief comes to everybody. One should now not sit with it. One should rather put it aside, shift one's gaze away from it, and get busy with some task. Haqq Ta'ala is prescribing this treatment. It is Allah Ta'ala who is treating the Nabi. Nobody else is capable of doing this. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had lied down in grief. What Allah Ta'ala is saying I am going to express in my own words: "Oonh! What are you lying down for? Come, come! Up you get! Make Allah, Allah. Come with us. Today we are going to the garden for a walk and cheer ourselves up. Come, there is a very amazing person who is here with us today." This is what a friend tries to do, be sympathetic and cheer him up.

Important rules with regard to nafl ibadat

So, when Allah Ta'ala stated, "Qumel-layl", it encompasses the whole night. Allah Ta'ala then modified it. Even if it is not the whole night, then a small portion of the night -"illa-qalil". Then this was explained even further as half the night: "nesfahu". Even if this cannot be managed, very well, less than this. In this way, decreasing it gradually to a very small amount - "awinqus minhu qalila". On the

other hand, if you feel like it, if your heart desires it and if you are not too tired, then more than this - "aw zid alayhi". In other words, freedom to choose has been given. Through Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) we are being being addressed, that those who are abids have been given a choice. Besides performing what is fardh, wajib and sunnate-mu'aqqadah, a choice has been given. Look at your health. Look at the free time you have. Look at the ease (sahulat) you have. Having looked at these, do not sit back contented merely by the performance of what is fardh ibadat, whether it is namaz, rozah, zakat or hajj. After the category of aqa'id (iman), these four ibadats are well-known.

Now, zakat is not compulsory on everybody. Hajj is not compulsory on everybody. However, namaz and rozah is compulsory on every baligh and sane Muslim. There is no getting out of these. However, when it comes to nafl, Allah Ta'ala has given us a choice.

Where have you sat back complacent, after having performed your five-times namazes? Move forward. Progress. Do not sit back contented with merely your five-times namazes. When it comes to progress as far as the material, perishable dunya is concerned, you have so much passion and you just want to progress more and more. Even your friends will tell you to move ahead, to go forward.

Material progress and Dini progress

Something comes to mind: The poor Maulanas are criticised, not only now but for some time past, and it is said, "Whenever the ‘Ulema speak, they only speak on moving forward with regard to namaz, rozah, zikr and so forth. They never speak about worldly progress. No alim ever speaks about material progress." Our

response is that even Allah Ta'ala encourages worldly progress, so how can an alim forbid it? "So, why is this subject not mentioned?" The answer to this is that the alim will speak on those subjects which are neglected. He will discuss those topics of the Din where there is negligence. As for those areas where there is self-generated enthusiasm, what need is there to speak to a person in such situations? Not only is he self-motivated, but there are his wife, his friends, his relatives and others in the community to encourage him as well. They will tell him, "You have made a large amount of profit from this venture, why not start another venture?" He starts another venture and makes even more profit. He is then encouraged some more by his friends and relatives. So, why should the alim also fall in line? We do not know what would happen then! So, the criticism levelled at the ‘Ulema, that they do not encourage worldly progress, is unfounded. It would be justified only if the people were negligent concerning worldly progress. To speak on this topic now would be completely superfluous. And it is forbidden to speak on superfluous matters. So, why speak on this topic?

The Ulema' are Na'ib-e-Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)

Let me continue where I had left off: In the beginning of the ayet quoted above, Allah Ta'ala is addressing us by addressing Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). "Stand up! One does not sleep through the entire night." O ye students! O ye ‘Ulema! Listen carefully! One does not sleep through the entire night. The ‘Ulema are, after all, the Na'ib-e-Rasul (represent Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), is that not so? But nowadays, as we hear people say, we are Na'ib-e-Rasul of dirham and dinar. And what was said about the Na'ib-e-Rasul over there?

The Ambiya do not leave behind dirham and dinar, but they leave behind 'ilm in their inheritance. So, that person who has taken up complete 'ilm has taken up his whole share of the inheritance. It is not befitting for the ‘Ulema to attach themselves in any aspect towards dirham and dinar, i.e towards material progress, towards money. You call yourselves Na'ib-e-Rasul and you extol the virtues of 'ilm, but you have become complacent with what you have studied of 'ilme-Rasul, that - instead of being engrossed in increasing this knowledge more and more, having learnt something, you should be learning something more - you have involved yourselves in earning dirham and dinar just like the dunyadars (materialists). You will then not be called Na'ib-e-Rasul.

A Na'ib-e-Rasul will be that person who will be pursuing the four categories after aqa'id, that is, in the perfection of ibadat, in the correction of mu'amulat, in the refinement of mu'asharat and the embellishment of akhlaq. Such a person will be called a Na'ib-e-Rasul. As for his material life, he will have complete qana'at (contentment) with what is halal tayyib. If he is absolutely strong of heart and the wife and children are also strong-hearted, then he has permission to leave even those means which are available for attaining wealth. This person will be called a tarikad-dunya.

The difference between a tarikad-dunya and a matrukud-dunya

There are two categories here. One is that person who is a tarikad-dunya, as explained above. The other category is that person who is a matrukud-dunya. There are no virtues attached to being a matrukud-dunya. What is a matrukud-dunya? He is that person who, on a gair-ikhtiyari basis - that is, not out of choice -

has no wealth at all. Nothing comes his way. He has nothing. He has not had to let go of anything, but wealth has left him. The tarikad-dunya, on the other hand, is that person who, despite having the means of accumulating wealth, has abstained from doing so with his heart. He does not utilise those means of earning that he has at his disposal.

From here we can see that those mu'min Muslims among the general populace who castigate such ‘Ulema and say, "They sit with folded arms doing nothing to earn a living. They have their eyes on the earnings of others," become sinners of the highest degree. They have earned sins by such statements. Remember, they are not asking you for anything. They do not come begging to your door; they are not obstructing you in any way. Why are you upset? Why are you being critical? It is your right not to give.

An illustration

Why? For this reason: Take the following illustration: You have an employee. You are paying him ten rupees everyday. Now, on this one day you have a visitor. Your worker has prepared an excellent meal. The visitor enjoys the meal tremendously. He has noticed that the worker has cooked the meal. The visitor asks the worker, "How much wages do you get?" He tells him. "What about board and lodging?" "That is free." The visitor then makes him an offer, "Very well. I will give you double the amount. I will give you twenty rupees daily. You come and work for me."

See what type of friend he has. The visitor comes to his friend's house and wants to take the worker away by offering double the amount he is earning. What is the

worker's response? He says, "I am very disappointed at what you are saying. Is this the type of friendship that you have? What a horrid suggestion you have made! I have been working here for a very long time. He has looked after me all these years. Even though you are offering me twenty rupees daily, I am not a 'nimak-haram'. I have eaten the salt here. I have spent a long time here eating his salt. The ten rupees I earn here are better than the twenty that you offer. I will not go with you." Have you understood his point?

If you have, then one other point by way of caution: Now, it so happens that somebody else comes to know of what happened. He tells the worker, "I heard that a visitor to the house offered you twenty rupees and you refused the offer. You are a very foolish person. This was progress for you. Double what you are earning is progress. Where will you get such an offer? You are very stupid." The worker replies, "You keep this progress. I am not one for it. This backwardness' with contentment is sufficient for me. It is not in my nature to be disloyal." Do you understand the point?

In a similar manner, the Allahwala is saying, "I also know how to progress. If I were to set my mind in that direction, I will progress more than you. However, the task that He - Allah Ta'ala - has set out for me, I am involved in executing that task. And He has taken responsibility for my rizq. Why should I do farming? Why should I be involved in trade? Why should I seek employment? I will not do so. If He gives, I will eat. If He withholds, I will not eat." This person has a strong heart - qawiyu-qalb. That person who is a true abid - he is a wali in the context of the shari'ah - he will not pay any attention in that direction.

He will eat if provided wih food, and not eat if the food is withheld. He is one with

qawiyu-qalb - a strong heart. The mas'alah is for such a person.

He may be strong-hearted, but his family may not be so. Therfore, in consideration of the family, he may do something or other. But if the family is also strong-hearted, then he will not do anything.

Our pious predecessors

Take the family of Shah Waliyullah Sahib (RA) - himself and Shah Abdul Aziz Sahib Shah Abdul Qader Sahib and others in that lineage: Can anybody prove that they did any farming? Were they involved in any trade? None whatsoever.

The following episode we heard from Hadhratwala (RA). When the British rule was established, the people in the top echelons of the British government came to meet Shah Abdul Qader Sahib. Whenever somebody gains some fame in an area, the eyes of the rulers fall on such a person as well. They fear such people also. When these British came, there were others also sitting there - students, attendants and others - they sent a message informing him of their coming and seeking permission to meet him.

Others have taken our teachings

This is very much part of our teachings: When going to meet somebody, inform him first. When you enter, make salam and ask permission to come in. When permission is given, then enter. These are our teachings but we have discarded them. The English study a lot and they have studied our kitabs. Whatever was of worldly benefit to them from studying our kitabs - the ayat of the Qur'an Sharif, the teachings in Hadith Sharif - they have taken for themselves. Whatever they considered was good from the material aspect they took for themselves. They have

utilised the best from our teachings. We, on the other hand, think that these are their teachings. This is our error. We are the ones who have discarded these teachings. We have discarded them to such a degree that in our minds we have ceased to recognise them as our own teachings! These teachings have become so foreign to us that when we see them practising on these we think that these are their teachings. Indeed not. These are not the teachings of the English but our teachings.

To continue: The British governor and his entourage entered after obtaining permission. They sat down. They did not understand Urdu. Nevertheless, they sat down. (There are some people of good temperaments: they hear nothing - the sound comes to the ears but they understand nothing. Nevertheless, they find delight in sitting there.) The gaze of the English is on materialism only, not on spiritual matters. Just as one finds people worshipping the sun, these are worshippers of materialism. They hold no value to spiritual matters.

They saw that Shah Abdul Qader Sahib was dressed well. They also noticed that the place was well furnished. On the other hand, they saw no activity that could be a source of income. They asked Shah Sahib, "From where do you eat?" Shah Sahib did not give any reply. He kept silent.

The British visitors sat for a while and then got up to leave. As they were about to leave, the governor brought out a satchel and took out some rupees from it. In those days the currency consisted of silver coins. He kept these in his palm and presented them to Shah Sahib and said, in his language, "My heart desires that you accept this as a gift." Shah Sahib immediately took the coins from his palm and said, "This is how we eat!"

By this statement Shah Sahib was actually conveying the following message: "Despite the fact that you are not a co-religionist of mine, that you are not related to me, that I am not your ustadh and that you are not my student, that I am not your pir and that you are not my murid, yet, despite all this, you are giving me a monetary gift. And I have not asked you. This is how I eat, that Allah Ta'ala had instilled it in your heart to give me. You gave the money and I took it."

So, what is the reason for doing other work when he was involved in the task allocated to him by Allah Ta'ala? Allah Ta'ala Himself will make the arrangements. Therefore, what need is there to go out and earn? Do you understand?

Take another illustration from the legal aspect: A person is in government employment. He may be a simple clerk. We will not consider the higher positions of commissioner and so forth. This governmet official, the clerk, now wants to go into business. The law is that he cannot do so in his own name. If he were to do so, and the government comes to find out, he will be dismissed. Fired! The government will say, "When you are working for us, and you are being paid by us, why do you go and do some other work? If you do some other work, then there will be negligence of the work we have given you."

So, the rule is that if a government employee, after having being given certain tasks to perform by the government, goes into some personal venture which the government does not approve of, he will be dismissed immediately. Similarly, if a person is involved in the tasks given to him by Allah Ta'ala, how can he do some other work? Do you understand? So, those ahlullah who are not involved in farming, trade, employment and other means of worldly earnings, cannot be

criticised. Just as you had praised the employee who refused the offer of twenty rupees and was contented with ten rupees and called him a man of valour, you are now calling those ‘Ulema who are turning away from worldly allure, to dedicate themselves to the tasks allocated to them by Allah Ta'ala, as weak-kneed and spineless! The loyal employee is called a man of courage and the loyal ‘Ulema are labelled as cowards! Why do you not call them brave and courageous?

Do you understand? I have given you two worldly illustrations, one of a government employee and the other of an ordinary employee. That is why it cannot be shown, with certain exceptions, that those whose status as true walis has been proved according to the laws of the shari'ah and the rights of the sharah, that they were involved in farming, trade or employment. Yet, they ate better than those that eat well. A good example is Hadhrat Shah Abdul Qadir Jilani (RA): Did he work for anybody?

Take also Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA). (We heard this from Hadhratwala RA): In Saharanpur there is a fort belonging to some nawabs, famously known as "The Fort". One of the nawabs from there sent a message to the father of Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) that he needed somebody to teach his children. Would he not ask his son to accept this position? Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) had just qualified as an alim. His father requested him to accept this position. He initially declined, but then accepted. He went to Saharanpur and taught there for a few months. However, he felt unsettled. His heart was not in doing this and he returned home. This happened soon after qualifying. He did not incline towards becoming a mudarris anywhere. For the rest of his life he did not carry out any farming, trade or employment. Yet, he ate better

than those who eat well, and he dressed better than those who dress well.

Take also our Hadhratwala (RA). He was a mudarris for a while in Kanpur: His ustadh, Maulana Yaqub Nanotwi (RA) was a very affectionate ustadh and he had sent him there to become head of department (sadr mudarris) at the age of twenty. When he left there, he came to stay in Thanah Bhowan where he remained for the rest of his life. This was according to the instruction of Haji Imdadullah (RA), who had told him, "When your heart feels disquieted in Kanpur and you leave there, do not attach yourself to any other place. Go and sit in the khanqah in Thanah Bowan, tawakkullan-alallah." Despite being in debt, Hadhratwala (RA) left. Initially, there were tests and trials, so much so that he had nothing. When visitors came, they were served whatever was available and husband and wife went to bed hungry. When Allah Ta'ala saw him succeeding in making sabr, the roads that opened were such that even kings have not been blessed with. He attained a very elevated stage. Allahu-Akbar! Once, so much came that Hadhratwala (RA) got frightened. "What must I do with all this?" he stated anxiously. They had no children and they were only two, husband and wife. So, he gave away one thousand rupees (of that time) to Deoband and one thousand rupees to Mazaharul-Ulum in Saharanpur. This he did out of fear of possessing so much.

Hadhratwala's (RA) father possessed big tracks of land, which he left behind on his demise. However, Hadhratwala (RA) took no benefit from these. He took no portion of the inheritance of the lands of his father. As for the debt his father had with regard to the unpaid mehr, he paid out from the share that was due to him, but he took nothing for himself personally from the inheritance of his father. Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) had written to him, "If you take from the

inheritance, it is according to fatwa, and if you do not take, it is according to taqwa." Hadhratwala (RA) never took. And he lived with ease and comfort.

In fact, he lived so well that whenever anybody sent a money-order as a gift to him and wrote a note saying, "Hadhrat, make du'a that Allah Ta'ala grants barkat and that I have sufficiency in my earnings," he would return the money-order with a note to say, "We do not sell du'as here."

As I have said, if a government employee is not allowed to do any other work in his own capacity - he may do so in the name of his wife or children - similar is the situation of these personages.

Going back to the theme of ibadat: an abid is not one who performs merely his five times fardh namazes. An abid is one who performs, besides the five times fardh namazes, an abundance of nafl ibadat. In what manner? With taqwa. Why? Because taqwa comes first and ibadat comes afterwards. The medical example is that parhez comes first and the medication comes afterwards. If a person is taking his medication but is not making parhez, then of what benefit is it? He would be better off if he does not take medication but observes parhez. Do you understand the point?

Once you have understood the point made, then know that the person who has a passion for ibadat, has been given a choice by Allah Ta'ala. There is no choice with regard to what are faraidh, which have set laws. So, what is the choice? Look at your ease and look at your strength, then make ibadat according to these.

Therefore, the Qur'an Sharif ayet states that stand up in ibadat at night. If you are unable to do so for the whole night, then half the night. If unable to do so for half the night, then less than this. And if one is able to, even more than this. We have

been given a choice. We have also been given a lesson in this. You will find that this surah, Surah Muzammil, is Tasawwuf from beginning to end. The abid and the zakir have been a given a choice - either do so much or, if unable to, then so much, but at least so much.

Reciting the Qur'an Sharif

The ayet continues: Recite the Qur'an Sharif in the correct manner - with tartil - either in your nafl namaz or out of namaz, while sitting. This time - the time of Tahajjud - is a pleasant and tranquil time of the night. A refreshing breeze is blowing. Get up and recite the Qur'an Sharif, recite it with tartil - that is, recite it by pronouncing the words clearly and fully. The sound of your voice should reach your own ears. There is no need to raise your voice or shout or read very loudly that the eyes of those who are sleeping in the house open. What have they done to you that you read so loudly as to disturb the sleep of these poor people? So, recite in the manner described.

Ulema' should set the example

A lesson has been give to the ‘Ulema. This is what we had spoken on before, that the ‘Ulema are the representatives of the Rasul. Every alim, beating his chest, proclaims himself to be the na'ib of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Standing in the mehrab, or whilst sitting on the mimbar, he expounds the virtues of 'ilm most forcefully and then he sleeps through the night! There is ease and he has the time, he has the opportunity, he has the youth, he is not tired from the day's work, he has the health, he is not ill, but he sleeps throughout the whole night after ‘Isha! Or he sits around talking after ‘Isha. Sitting around and talking is going to

cause him to be late. Never mind getting up at night for ibadat, but his namaz with jama'at is also missed. Even if he does not sit around talking and goes to sleep immediately after ‘Isha, he sleeps so deeply that his Fajr namaz with jama'at is missed. And what does he call himself? A Na'ib-e-Rasul! And he lectures on the virtues of 'ilm, that the virtues are such-and-such.

Remember that Allah Ta'ala is listening as well as watching.

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ

Lo! Allah is Hearer, Knower. S.31 A.28

Allah Ta'ala is listening to what you say and He sees what you are doing. Where the word "alim" is used, it means that He knows the conditions of your hearts. Where the word "sami" is used, it means that He listens to your talks, how you carry tales about others. Where the word "basir" is used, it means that He sees your actions, how you lie around.

These virtues appear to be for the enemies! Shabash! Congratulations! Live long! May you have long life. [These statements are made as a reprimand, using sarcasm. - Translator]

وَتَنسَوْنَ أَنفُسَكُمْ

... while you yourselves forget (to practise it)? S.2 A.44

No! These virtues are foremost for you, and then for others. Just see the Hadith Sharif on the numerous virtues of Tahajjud. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has given priority, importance and elevation to it over other nafl. These have been taught as well in all the kitabs of Hadith. All the ten kitabs of Hadith that are taught have these in them. Yet, with great difficulty the five times namazes are performed!

In the true meaning of the word, it is the ‘Ulema who are the true walis, provided that they do the work of a wali and do not involve themselves in other types of work.

So, besides the category of aqa'id, which is connected to iman, we should check ourselves on the other four categories: what is the quality of our ibadat? What type of dealings (mu'amalat) are we engaged in? What are our lifestyles (mu'asharat) like - are they pure, and what are our characters (akhlaq) like? When all these are judged to be correct in the pans of the scale and on the standards laid down, then that person will be an alim-e-Rabbani and an alim-e-Haqqani. If he has studied in-depth, recognising the reality behind the teachings, and, if he has developed yaqin (conviction) with it, then he will act on this knowledge and he will become an alim-e-Rabbani as well. So, becoming an alim-e-Haqqani comes first and to become an alim-e-Rabbani goes with it. Such a person will be an abid.

Nafl ibadat - further explanation

It is to such a person that Allah Ta'ala is referring when He states, "O abid, I am desirous of your good health. Sound health takes priority over nafl ibadat. If you have made nafl ibadat in such a manner that it has affected your health, then you have done wrong. You will be called to account for it: Why did you perform nafl ibadat in such a manner, to such an extent that your health has suffered, so that you did not remain capable of performing your fardh ibadat correctly and with the tranquillity demanded of it? I will call you to account on this. I did give you a choice and I did tell you that mere laziness will not be an excuse for leaving out nafl. However, if you have valid Shar'i excuses - illness affecting you, physical

weakness overtaking you, being unduly tired because of working, or being on a journey - and you leave out what is nafl, fine, you have permission. At the same time, being in these situations, in carrying out your schedule of ibadat, neither is illness a barrier, nor will the illness get worse, nor is tiredness a barrier, nor is weakness a barrier, nor is the journey a barrier, then it is a matter of courage to carry on. You will not be called to account for not carrying out what is nafl. However, you being an abid, and you, O abid, have muhabbat for Me, and the demands of muhabbat are that, unless there are some very special circumstances which present themselves, you will persist."

The demands of muhabbat are such that the abid, even in the face of not being commanded to do something by the Mehbub, and even being told not to do that particular thing - this prohibition not being a command, that if you do it you will be punished, but it being a suggestion made for the welfare of the abid - the abid will still carry out that task. Do you understand?

The wisdom behind two opposing advices

On what basis is this stated? The proof is in a Hadith Sharif: A Sahabi (RA) came and said, "O Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)! I intend going on a journey. Should I fast or should I not fast?" Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) replied, "Is it a good thing to fast whilst on a journey?" The reply was given in such a tone as to discourage him from fasting. He did not fast.

At another time another Sahabi (RA) came to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and asked, "O Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)! I intend going on a journey. Should I fast or not?" Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)

replied, "Why should you not fast?" This time the tone was such that he should fast. On the previous occasion the tone was such that the Sahabi (RA) should not keep.

This appears to be confusing. Both men were intending the same type of activity. The one is told not to fast and the other is told to fast. In other words, one is instructed not to carry out an injunction and the other is told to carry out an injunction. Has the mas'alah been established?

Now, the reason for the differing answers: the first person was an old person, physically weak, going on a journey. He was told that it was not a good thing to fast, so that he does not fast. The second person was a young person and he was told that there was no reason why he should not fast, so that he should fast. Do you now understand?

When the Shari'at has considered us on every occasion and every circumstance, then why do we, on our own, come up with lame excuses? We fail to realise that these lame excuses may fool the creation but will not work with Allah Ta'ala. These lame excuses are not acceptable.

One excuse is, "I am very tired." What makes you so tired? Were you ploughing the fields? Were you grinding a millstone? Were you hawking, trudging the whole day selling clothes from door to door? What have you really done? Why are you tired? You are young. Why did you not get up for Tahajjud? Why did you not sit up and go make wudhu? Why did you not perform your Tahajjud? Have you not read Surah Muzammil? You kept on sleeping?

These topics are mentioned because you are a talib - you are a seeker. You are showing your quest by your behaviour. That is why these matters are told to you.

What is the reason for this illness of laziness? This is also an illness.

So, when there are no valid excuses, then laziness should be discarded. Laziness and suluk do not go together. Talab (seeking) and laziness cannot co-exist. Talab and alertness can go together. Talab and courage can co-exist. Talab and laziness cannot co-exist Why this laziness then? How can you deceive yourself? How can you deceive your sheikh? How can you make lame excuses?

That is why Maulana Rumi has said:

You can present falsehood to the creation a truth,

But it can never happen that you can show falsehood as truth to the Creator.

He has given a warning.

We had originally said that Din has two parts: manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha. Manhi-anha is not to go near those actions from which you have been forbidden. Abstain from them. Ma'mur-biha - fulfil these tasks fully and completely. This is a command. A command can be in the category of wajib or it can be in the category of mustahab. What is wajib you have compulsorily to carry out. There is no question of omitting these. Namaz is in this category: you have to perform namaz, even it be by means of signs and the lifting of your head only, if you are so ill. If you are unable to stand, or even to sit, then lie down and perform your namaz by movements of the head, lifting it forward slightly for the ruku' and a bit more for the sajdah. Then, how can one make lame excuses?

Ishq - passionate love

Whether the order is in the category of wajib or mustahab, you have a greater responsibility, seeing that you are one of the muhabbin, with regard to whom Allah

Ta'ala states:

لذين امنوا اشد حبا لله

Those who believe are passionate in their love for Allah.

S.2 A.165

Allah Ta'ala is stating that the mu'min has passionate love for Allah Ta'ala. Does shiddate-muhabbat mean little or superficial muhabbat? No. Shiddat refers to an intense love, what is called ishq. From this we can see that the noble status of a mu'min is that he should live the life of an ashiq of Allah Ta'ala. Is that not so? This is what Allah Ta'ala is saying: that person who is a mu'min should be very severe in his love for Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala is not using the word "shadid" but He uses the term "ashadd-e-muhabbat". "Ashadd-e-muhabbat" is in the superlative. That is, not just "intense" but "very intense". When muhabbat (love) increases very much then it is called ishq (passion).

In the worldly situation (that is, where a man loves a woman) you find that this person is then restless day and night because of his muhabbat. He finds it difficult to eat even a piece of roti. When he dreams, it is about her; when he speaks it is about her. Do you understand the point?

So, the mu'min should be an ashiqe-ilahi. Now, will an ashiq search for excuses? Will he say, with regard to an instruction, "Is it necessary to carry it out"? Will such a thought come into his mind? It will never enter his mind. On the contrary, the ashiq will try and see where his gaze falls. He will try and fathom what his features are implying. Take this worldly example: The facial expression of the mehbub indicates that he is thirsty. So, the ashiq will quickly bring some water,

although he was not instructed to do so. "How did you know that I was thirsty?" He replies, "Your parched lips told me so." He is congratulated on his alertness.

The demands of ishq

So, the ashiq looks at the wishes of the mehbub. In the face of an instruction given to him, can he ignore it? Can he then ask, "Is this necessary or unnecessary? Is it necessary to obey your command or is it not necessary?" He claims to have muhabbat and yet asks for an explanation of an order given to him.

It is for this reason that Hadhratwala (RA) used to feel upset and expel people. One day a person came and asked something of Hadhratwala (RA), who replied, "Ofo, it is a sin! Dear brother, what you asking - what you want to do - is sinful." This person then asked, "Is it a minor sin or a major sin?" At this Hadhratwala (RA) became annoyed and said, "What you are implying is that if it is a minor sin, you will do it. Have you no shame? You have the gall to say that you will do it if it is a minor sin? Have you no honour? Get up from in front of me and be away from here!"

This was said because of the importance of the honour of the Din. This person was expelled from there.

How can there be such a question when there is ashadd-e-muhabbat? How can a person put forward such a question when he has ishq? If, on his own, he is ready to carry out the task, and if the task is an ordinary matter, the mehbub himself will see that the person is prepared to carry out the task on him asking him, but he may not be able to do so because of physical weakness, so he himself will say, "Come, sit down. I am not that thirsty. Come, sit." He is now being considerate to him. He

merely wanted to see if he was prepared to bring him some water to drink. However, when he saw that he was a frail person, he stopped him.

Hadhratwala (RA) had expelled the person mentioned above, from the khanqah. Now take another situation: Another person had made some error. Hadhratwala (RA) told him, "Leave the majlis!" This person stood up and started walking to the stairs leading out of the khanqah. Hadhratwala (RA) called out to him in a stern voice, "Where are you going in that direction? Why don't you sit in the masjid here?" The masjid is situated adjacent to the majliskhanah. So, on the one hand he is told to leave and, at the same time, he is prevented from leaving. Hadhratwala understood what type of person he was, and he understood what type of person the other one was who was actually expelled. The sheikh will himself be considerate. The reason is that the sheikh portrays the qualities of Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala Himself is considerate of you. If you do not take into consideration His thoughtfulness, then there will be nothing left.

Manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha - further elucidation

We were discussing manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha. We had said that manhi-anha comes first and that ma'mur-biha comes afterwards. The meaning of ma'mur-biha is that as far as huquqs (rights) are concerned, besides what is fardh, wajib and sunnate-mu'qqidah, the rest of the orders come afterwards. As for the manhi-anha: these may be related to taqwa at the lowest level or related to taqwa at the highest level. Both these levels of taqwa have to be achieved. However, you cannot attain the higher levels of taqwa of manhi-anha until, slowly, slowly, you have not attained the lowest levels of taqwa of manhi-anha.

The reason is that your temperament is one of freedom, of being unrestricted. Now that you have come here for your islah (self-rectification), firstly, be kind enough to leave off now the minor sins, and attend to the major sins later on. Degree by degree, these also will be discarded, and so forth. And become like that peasant whose qissah I am about to relate.

A qissah

The peasant, when he became bay'at, Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA), got him to make taubah of all his sins. At that time he had the habit of taking opium. He told Maulana Gangohi (RA), "But you did not make me make taubah from taking opium." Maulana asked him, "Do you take opium?" He replied, "Yes, I do." Maulana asked him, "Very well. How much do you take daily?" He mentioned the amount. Maulana then told him to take a little bit less every day. The peasant left.

After a few days he was back and presented Maulana with a gift. Maulana Gangohi (RA) was blind at that stage of his life. He accepted the gift. The peasant then said, "Molviji, you have taken the gift, but you did not ask me where I got it from." Maulana Gangohi (RA) said, "Very well. Tell me." The peasant said, "I used to take opium and you advised me to decrease the amounts daily. I thought to myself: My pir's purpose in doing this is to make me give it up. So, Molviji, I understood that my pir wanted me to give it up. What did I become bay'at for? I realised that my pirji was being considerate to me by getting me to decrease the amounts gradually. So, I went home and destroyed all the opium I had. I stopped taking opium. My nafs then told me, ‘You have done an excellent thing by curing this

illness! You can now save a lot of money.' I thought about it and I concluded that the illness of taking opium had gone, but the illness of miserliness has replaced it, that I will save some money now! So, I collected the money I would have spent daily on opium. This is the money that I have collected over these few days and brought as a gift for you." Maulana Gangohi (RA) congratulated him, "Ma-sha-Allah! You have shown great courage. You have worked with sagacity." Where will a person habituated to such a drug leave it?

Do you see the quality of the peasant? In contrast, over here, those of you who are learning 'ilm, who should have full yaqin, and have entered the silsilah on top of it, and you have even made a firm promise at the time of becoming bay'at, but you are where you were. This is the result of being unrestricted.

Allah Ta'ala is stating that He is showing consideration towards you. The purpose is that major sins should be discarded completely and that the process of stopping minor sins should commence. You have made taubah on major sins. So, do not commit major sins. What is the meaning of going near them?

If you have stopped doing what is mustahab, then today you will stop doing what is sunnat, tomorrow you will stop doing what is wajib and the following day you will stop doing what is fardh. This is the sequence of events.

So, manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha are two categories of the Din. When a person is performing both with perfection, then it will be said that he is involved in the work of Din. However, if a person takes on ma'mur-biha but pays no attention to what is manhi-anha, then how can a person become dindar by him just taking up one portion?

Nafi-ithbat - Negation & Affirmation - explained further

Right at the beginning I had said that taqwa comes first and ibadat comes afterwards, just like parhez comes first and medication comes afterwards. Both manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha are present in detail in the comprehensive and detailed Shari'at. I had also said that both these categories are to be found in the Kalimah Sharif. Both manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha are to be found in the Kalimah Sharif. In what way? In the following manner: La-ilaha is nafi (negation) and illallah is ithbat (affirmation). In the nafi that is in La-ilaha all items that are forbidden, have been included. In illallah is ithbat and includes all those items that we are ordered to do. So, La-ilaha has in it manhi-anha, and illallah has in it ma'mur-biha. Do you understand the points made?

However, these are in concise forms, without details. Then come the detailed explanations, and these are contained in Muhammadur Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has given the details of La-ilaha and also of illallah - he has narrated in detail what is manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha.

Now, all of you do me the favour, as far as manhi-anha is concerned, do not go into the details of whether it is makruh-tanzihi or makruh-tahrimi, or whether it is mushtabah or haram. Do not go into these details. Know that it is in the category of manhi-anha. Why do you want to go into the question of whether it is haram or whether it is makruh-tahrimi or whether it is makruh-tanzihi or whether it is mushtabah or whether it is khilafe-aula. Why not? The reason is that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had also explained what is mushtabah.

Abstain from that which is doubtful

الحلال بين و الحرام بين و بينهما آمور مشتبهت

This is the full Hadith Sharif that is read in Bukhari Sharif and taught from it. It means that what is obviously halal is clear. There is no need to query it. Similarly, what is obviously haram is also clear. What is the need to ask about it or not to abstain from it? Between the two is what is doubtful - mushtabah. From certain circumstances and signs it appears that it may be halal yet, from other circumstances and signs it appears to be haram. This is now doubtful - it is in the category of mushtabah.

Abstain from such doubtful items and, having left such doubtful items, cleanse your iman. This is the meaning of "istanzihu". Remove the grime and dirt from your iman. Make your iman pure, so that no dirt and grime remain.

Muhammadur-Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is the clear, full and detailed explanation and commentary of La-ilaha-illallah. Whoever does not comply with this but adopts only La-ilaha-illallah is astray - away from the straight path. Shaitan will be standing with him all the time. The ruses of the nafs will accompany him all the time. This person's iman will be defective and grossly deficient. Further, if he refutes it, then his iman has gone!

So, Kitabullah and the Hadith Sharif of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), taken together, comprise the complete Din. Do you understand? The full shari'ah is the detailed explanation of La-ilaha-illallah, with manhi-anha depicting La-ilaha and ma'mur-biha depicting illallah.

So, to take only one aspect, what kind of justice is it? It would be contrary to

justice and contrary to taqwa. It would be contrary to parhez. There will be no special benefit derived. It is like taking medication but not abstaining from harmful foods - there will be no special benefit. If a person observes parhez and he does not take any medication, there will be some benefit. But if he makes parhez and takes the medication, then - subhanallah! - the benefit will be great.

Say that he observes ma'mur-biha and also abstains from manhi-anha. As for the ma'mur-biha, he does not leave out even what is mustahab and, as for the manhi-anha, he abstains from what is mushtabah as well. Such a person, observing the ma'mur-biha and abstaining from the manhi-anha as described, will be called a wali. He will be a wali of Allah Ta'ala. He will be a muttaqi.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ

O ye who believe! Observe your duty to Allah

By this Allah Ta'ala is virtually saying, "O ye believers! Having discarded kufr and shirk - these being major acts of parhez - and with the iman and taqwa that you have adopted, you have become mu'min, but see here, I am explaining to you that you have taken on a great burden on your head. After adopting this taqwa, certain laws of Allah Ta'ala are incumbent on you to follow. Now you have to be constantly in fear of contravening these laws. You have now become Mine." What a nice thing Allah Ta'ala is saying: "You have now become Mine. My name is Mu'min and your name is also mu'min. Your responsibility has increased. Therefore, I am telling you that you should honour the name you have - you should take your name into consideration. Therefore, as for the commands that this mu'min has to observe and which come from that Mu'min, take precautions not to contravene them. Be fearful. Be vigilant. Be safeguarded. It should not be that you

are neglectful and your iman is snatched away."

This is what Allah Ta'ala is saying concerning taqwa, addressing the believers. The ayet goes on:

حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ

with right observance,

Have fear as is the haqq of being fearful - in a full manner. It should not be that some aspect of taqwa is adopted and some aspect is left off. It should not be that some portion of the Qur'an Sharif is taken and some portion is left off. This taqwa is deficient and may even be greatly defective at times.

وَلاَ تَمُوتُنَّ إِلاَّ وَأَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ

and die not save as those who have surrendered (unto Him).

S.3 A.102

Until death. This right of taqwa has to be adopted till the time of death. What is of credence is what happens in the end. It must not be that in the beginning you enthusiastically adopt taqwa and leave it in the end. What is of value is what happens in the end and not what happened in the beginning.

It would have been a better situation where that you may not have had taqwa in the beginning, but ended with taqwa. In this situation the taqwa that developed afterwards would counteract and compensate the lack of taqwa in the beginning. What took place initially will not be taken into account and what happened in the end will be counted by Allah Ta'ala. The ending is taken into account. Therefore, until death.

Allah Ta'ala is saying, "Those anti-taqwa deeds that you had performed before adopting taqwa, do no even think of them, that I did such-and-such. Do not

remember them. Have hope. I have already told you that, seeing that you have counter-acted and compensated for the deficiencies, that I will not hold you accountable for them. When there is no accountability by Me, then why is there regret for them? Why do you grieve? Why do you ponder over them? You are now deliberately hitting your foot with an axe. I have taken the axe from your hand, but you have snatched it back from me! Why do that?"

The grace and Muhabbat of Allah Ta'ala - a qissah

Let me relate a qissah concerning the muhabbat of Allah Ta'ala:

The bondsman mu'min of Allah Ta'ala made wudhu and proceeded to the masjid to perform namaz. This is what should be done - make wudhu at home and then proceed to the Court of Allah Ta'ala. Now, before this, the bandah had committed some sin. Having made wudhu he was now proceeding to the masjid, to the Court of Allah Ta'ala to make salam to Allah Ta'ala.

The method of making salam to Allah Ta'ala is different for the different times - in the morning it is one way, just after noon it is another, later it is different, after sunset it is different, at night it is different and in the last portion of the night it is different. These are all methods for making salam.

So, this bandah was proceeding along and arrived at the door of the Court of Allah Ta'ala - that is, the door of the masjid. Remember that he had committed some sin prior to this and he had not made taubah. He was carrying this impurity of his sin together with some purity of his wudhu. However, at the entrance was standing an angel. This one is a different one from the Kiraman-Katibin - the C.I.D. - who are with us all the time and whom we should be conscious of.

So, this angel wanted to stop the bandah from entering. He said to Allah Ta'ala, "He is coming in with some impurity into Your Royal Court. How can I let him enter in this condition?" (What I am relating is the substance of a Hadith Sharif.) Allah Ta'ala told him, "Well, lift the impurity off him. He will then be pure (pak). Then he will be able to enter." The angel followed the instruction and lifted the impurity of his sin off him.

The bandah entered the masjid and performed namaz, after which he went outside. The angel asked Allah Ta'ala, "Shall I replace the impurity I had lifted off him?" Allah Ta'ala replied, "Seeing that I had instructed you to lift it off, how can the question of replacing it arise? Throw it away!"

What a great thing! How great is the karam (bounty) of Allah Ta'ala on the mu'min! Take this illustration: The child's feet were dirty and grimy. He should have taken some warm water and a brush and scrubbed them himself, but he did not do so. His mother then washed the child's feet with the warm water. Actually, it would have been better if he had washed them himself, but he was unconcerned. Similarly, in the above situation it is Allah Ta'ala Who is washing away the sins of the person going to the masjid to perform his namaz.

Is this not something to ponder over? Is it not being considerate? How much is Allah Ta'ala not desirous of the mu'min bandah! Excuse upon excuse! Excuse upon excuse! Allah Ta'ala is removing the filth and grime. Allah Ta'ala is virtually saying, "When he comes to Me, he should not even see the face of Jahannam. Never mind going into Jahannam, he should not see even the face of Jahannam." What is it that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), whom Allah Ta'ala has sent, said? He explained, "You are flying into the fire like flying insects rushing

into a fire. In the same manner you are rushing into the fire of Jahannam, and I am trying to save you with both my hands, but you are forcefully overcoming me. What a sad state you are in!" This demonstrates Rasulullah's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) affection and muhabbat.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is not only the ambassador and not one who merely brought a message, but he is one who sacrificed himself for the welfare of the Ummat. He stood up at night to beg for forgiveness for the Ummat. Yet you are overpowering him. Just look at his muhabbat, that of Rahmatul-alimin; and look also at the muhabbat of Arhamur-rahimin. Measure according to these two, Allah Ta'ala and our Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). As for us? We show no remorse. Never mind making ibadat in abundance, we cannot manage even the five fardh namazes.

A certain poet has put this very well. This poetry should be memorised and remembered all the time. The poetry is in Farsi. The translation of it is:

"Look at the karam (grace) and lutf (favour) of Allah Ta'ala,
That the bandah commits the sin but He feels ashamed!"

What a severe statement! In order to understand it, take the following illustration: When it is the child who commits an unseemly act, it is the father who feels ashamed. Is this not so? The guilty person is the child but it is the father who feels ashamed.

Allah Ta'ala has much greater affection for the mu'min bandah than a father for his son. So, when the bandah commits some unseemly act, Allah Ta'ala feels ashamed. The poet says, in the words of Allah Ta'ala, "Just look at My karam (benevolence). You are the one who has committed a sin, but I am the one who feels ashamed."

It is as if to say, "Having become one of Mine, is this your behaviour? Being My son, is this what you are up to? You have besmirched the name of your family. Even if you cannot maintain a good reputation for My sake, at least do not create a slur on your name. How could you do it?"

Allah Ta'ala has explained it in our terminology that we would understand, "Just look at My karam, at My benevolence. You are the one who has committed a sin, but I am the one who feels ashamed. You should ponder over this yourselves, that if your child were to behave in an unseemly manner, what emotions would pass through you at that moment. So, you, being a mu'min - that is, metaphorically a son of Mine - were you to do something unseemly will I not be affected? Ponder."

"You are not my Lord..." - a qissah

On this, Hadhratwala placed in our ears the story of one person. This is also worthy of memorising. Just as I had said that the poetry mentioned earlier is worthy of being remembered, this is also worthy of being memorised and kept in mind all the time. Its awareness should be there all the time and brought forth immediately. What is the incident? It is the following:

There was a buzurg sitting on the steps of the Jami'ah Masjid in Delhi. He was saying loudly, "You are not my Lord and I am not your bondsman, so, why should I obey your commands?"

The people walking past him heard him and condemned him for his statement. "He has gone mad, completely mad," said some. Others said, "He has become a kafir - he has turned away from Islam." Others said, "This is shirk. He has become a mushrik." "He is a munafiq." Those passing by kept on making similar comments.

One person came and stood by him and listened attentively to him. After a while he addressed the buzurg and asked, "Mian, what are you saying and to whom are you speaking?" The buzurg laughed and said, "All of the people of Delhi who passed by here are idiots. As they passed by, some said one thing and others another. Mad, insane, kafir, munafiq, mushrik - each one had a comment to make. You have turned out to be intelligent. You decided to enquire before passing judgement. Listen! I am addressing my nafs. My nafs has been vexing me for some time now. My nafs is telling me, ‘Feed me some halva.' How shall I feed it halva, seeing I have no money? Shall I steal some? Shall I get some by defrauding the shopkeeper? Shall I go out and beg just to feed it halva? So, I am telling my nafs, ‘You are not my Lord and I am not your bondsman, so, why should I obey your commands?'"

The real culprit is Nafs and not Shaitan

This qissah was related to us by Hadhratwala. What an amazing incident. Is that not so? Remember that the original culprit is not Shaitan. Shaitan only lends support. The original wrongdoer is nafs. The proof is there. Before Shaitan became Shaitan, was there a Shaitan to mislead him? Can you show me? So, how did Shaitan become corrupt? What was there? It was nafs!

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا

And inspired it (with conscience of) what is wrong for it and (what is) right for it.

S.91 A.8

Fujur (transgression) became dominant. It was lying hidden in the nafs. Shaitan had the fujur of kibr (arrogance), which is the root of kufr. Kibr is the root of kufr.

Why did he not bring iman? It was because of kibr. Did he not know? Was he ignorant? Not at all. He was well aware. But Shaitan had developed kibr. He became proud of his 'ilm. He was boastful of his ibadat. He forgot who was giving the command to prostrate. He justified his action by saying, "Have I not seen that Adam was created from sand, whereas I was created from fire? How can I bow down to him?" Kibr manifested in his nafs.

So, it is apparent the primary culprit is nafs and not Shaitan, who merely lends support. That is why the buzurg said that it was his nafs that demanded to eat halva. Is eating halva haram? Is it na-pak (impure)? Of course not. What sin would he have been committed by eating halva? None, whatsoever.

On the other hand, is eating halva wajib? It is neither compulsory, nor sunnat, nor mustahab. It is eaten merely to fill one's stomach. So, seeing that the eating of halva has no status in the Shari'ah, where is it permissible to beg to obtain halva? Not at all. Do you understand the point made?

To beg is disgraceful

السـوال ذل

This is a Hadith Sharif: To ask (beg) is disgraceful.

The hearts of the Sahabah (RA), were extremely strong. They abstained from such actions that were completely permissible, but refrained from them based on their external meanings. Take the following incident:

One Sahabi (RA) was riding on his horse. He had a small whip in his hand. The whip fell out of his hand to the ground. He climbed off his horse to pick up the whip. There was another Sahabi (RA) who was walking nearby, who saw his

action and came up to him and said, "Hadhrat, why did you go to all the trouble of climbing off to pick up the whip? I was nearby. You should have asked me. It would not have been much of an effort on my part to walk over and pick up the whip and hand it to you." The first Sahabi (RA) replied, "Our Habib had forbidden us to ask. So, if I were to request you, then it would be asking, and asking is disgraceful. If I can do my own work myself, why should I ask others?"

This was their temperament.

The Hadith Sharif says that to ask is disgraceful. Therefore, just as it is haram to steal or defraud for the sake of eating halva, it is also haram to beg. There are special and dire circumstances, when three days have passed without having anything to eat and one's life is at stake, then Allah Ta'ala Himself has given permission. In this situation it would be permissible even to eat carrion. So, eating by begging in this situation would be permissible even more so. However, until this dire situation has not arisen, how can one ask? How can one beg? The Sahabi (RA) provided the example.

The buzurg explained, "Eating halva is not forbidden, but the manner of obtaining it is forbidden. So, should I listen to my nafs and go out to beg from others just to feed it halva? What a disgraceful thing to do! The mouth will have tasted something sweet, but I would have been humiliated by begging."

The lesson to be remembered from this is that the enjoyment that leads to disgrace, that enjoyment should be refrained from, even though that enjoyment is in the category of being mubah. Tasting bitterness after having tasted something sweet is to be avoided. Yes, to have something sweet after having eaten something bitter, is fine.

Physical illnesses and illnesses of the Nafs

Take an illustration: medicines, mostly, are traditionally bitter. They also emit an unpleasant odour However, in order to cure an illness and attain good health, it is necessary to take that bitter medicine. In a similar manner, if something is prescribed, something that is burdensome and heavy, in order to cure the illnesses of the nafs, why should this remedy not be taken, as one would take bitter medicine to cure a physical illness?

There is an important difference between the two illnesses. If a person dies with a physical illness, there will be no consequences for him after death. However, the illnesses of the nafs are such that, if a person were to die while still afflicted with these illnesses, it is not the end of the problem, but he will experience the consequences after death. A person may suffer from a physical illness while in this world, but this physical suffering will come to an end at the time of death. On the other hand, a person may not feel the effects of illnesses of the nafs in this world - he may suffer no pains from them - but he will experience the effects after death if he were to die with them. So, which illnesses are more serious amd more to be concerned about? Definitely, the illnesses of the nafs are more serious and not physical illnesses.

Yet, we see how much thought and effort is put into curing physical illnesses, but there is no concern about the illnesses of the nafs. A person will take bitter medicines, tolerating their malodour, to cure his physical illness, but he is unconcerned about curing the illnesses of his nafs, even though the medication here is not as bitter. The reason is that the person's temperament is one of freedom, and that is why he considers this medication to be bitter.

As I was saying, the primary culprit is the nafs and not Shaitan. People blame Shaitan for nothing. That is why that buzurg, who was sitting on the steps of the Jamiah Masjid in Delhi, was saying, "You are not my Lord and I am not your bondsman, so why should I obey your command?" People who heard him were shocked and made various comments. "What kind of a buzurg is he? Just listen to what he is saying!" However, when his statement was queried and the explanation was given and the situation explained, the people came to realise that there was no doubt about his being a buzurg. In fact, he was a great buzurg, opposing his nafs in its desire to eat halva.

Is this qissah not worth remembering? Our Sheikh, Hadhrat Thanwi (RA), related it to us.

So, memorise the poetry quoted above and keep it in mind, and keep the statement of this buzurg in front of you and, insha-Allah Ta'ala, if not all at once, but slowly and steadily, with the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala, a time will come when you will be able to save yourselves from contravening the commands of Allah Ta'ala.

There are some with courage who, while sitting here and before getting up, will have resolved to act accordingly and will be saved. For such, one majlis is sufficient, with the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala. The reason is that, while sitting here, they make an intention with sincerity. Assistance will come from there. How will this assistance come? In the following manner:

Reaching Allah Ta'ala - a qissah

We heard this from Hadhratwala. After all, we are from there! We had handed ourselves into his hand, the hand of the Sheikh, and sold ourselves into the hand of

Allah Ta'ala. But the world is a place where means have to be adopted.

So, what did Hadhratwala relate to us? He used to explain by means of stories, incidents and examples and illustrations so that very complex and heavy material used to just flow into our hearts.

He said, "Salikin are involved in attaining wasil-bil-Haqq - a special bond with Allah Ta'ala. There is nothing special or difficult about this process. Carry on with the effort, carry on. You will reach there. How will you reach there? In the following manner." Hadhratwala (RA) then related the following qissah:

One buzurg was travelling somewhere. While travelling along he happened to pass by the bottom of the palace of the king. The king was sitting on top of the parapet in his palace. His eyes fell on the buzurg. The king called down to the buzurg, "Miansahib! Come here!"

The buzurg said, "You are high up there and I am right down here at the bottom - how can I come up?" The king ordered a kamand to be lowered to him for him to be pulled up. A kamand was like a modern-day lift - a sort of rope with a harness or small platform that was used to lift people on to the parapet from below the wall of the palace or castle. The buzurg sat on it and was pulled up to where the king was. After salams and shaking of hands, the king had him seated. The king then started conversing with him. During the conversation, the king asked, "Mian, how did you reach Allah Ta'ala?" The buzurg replied, "In the same manner that I reached you!"

This is how Hadhratwala explained to us. What an amazing and deep concept was explained to us using a simple illustration.

The buzurg explained further, "In the same manner that I have reached you. I was

just travelling along in the direction of Allah Ta'ala and, just as your gaze fell on me, Allah Ta'ala's gaze fell on me. Now, I was unable to reach Him even though I wanted to reach Him. So, how to reach him? His bounteous gaze fell on me and He said, ‘Come to Me.' How could I reach Him? He then pulled me up to Him, just like you had me pulled up to you. My task was to make an effort, to walk along. This I did, making the effort to walk along. This was my duty. To reach the destination was not my duty. When He saw that this individual was walking towards Him and making an effort, and that, without support from Him and taking his hand, he will not manage, He took my hand and pulled me towards Him, just as you pulled me up to be with you."

Hadhratwala said, "O bondsmen of Allah, just see: it is a very easy matter. All you have to do is walk along. Leave aside the thought of whether you have reached or not reached your destination. But do as follows. Do what?

"To find or not to find, You are the Mukhtar;

You should keep on running."

That is, it is in His ikhtiyar (power and choice) for you to find or not to find. It is not your duty. Your task is to keep on going, keep on running. Keep yourself occupied with this concern, with taqwa. That is all. That is your task. As for finding, this will happen, as is His promise. But you remove this from your gaze. Stop being in anticipation of it. Divert your gaze from this and do not be in anticipation of it. Rather, busy yourself in the zikr of Allah Ta'ala, with taqwa. The fruits you will attain. Why? Because it is His promise.

فَأُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُم مَّشْكُورًا وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَىٰ لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ

And whoso desireth the hereafter and striveth for it with the effort necessary, being

a believer; for such, their effort findeth favour (with their Lord). 17. A.19

The mu'min has been pulled up. So, leave aside the issue of how or when. You carry on. You have muhabbat, so you should carry on. The fruits you will receive. Allah Ta'ala Himself is saying, "Walk towards Me. I will seat you on My lap. This may be beyond your imagination, but you walk towards Me, with taqwa and zikr, then you will see that I will seat you in My lap." In the terminology of the Sufiyah: "Stumbling and falling, in joy and sadness, keep on coming, and just like your mother does not allow you to fall and she takes you into her lap, I will also seat you in My lap." This is what Allah Ta'ala has stated through the lips of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), "That bondsman who walks with sincerity of intention, one hand's breadth in My direction, observing the full Shari'at and following My orders, I will approach him two hands' breadth. That bondsman that comes towards Me one cubit's length, I will approach him in leaps and bounds. And that bondsman that comes towards Me in leaps and bounds, I will also run towards him. And that bondsman that runs towards Me, I will take him into My lap."

You will have seen how a mother will try to encourage her toddler to try and walk. By getting the child to walk on his own, the child will develop strength in his legs and develop the ability to stand on his own. She realises that if she were to carry him in her lap all the time, he will become handicapped and will not be able to walk at all. Similarly, Allah Ta'ala also wants one to walk on one's own and not always take support from others. When the child walks the mother will watch him closely and the moment she sees his legs starting to buckle, she will quickly rush to take the child into her lap so that the child does not fall.

Similarly with Allah Ta'ala, that He watches closely as the bondsman walks towards Him. The moment He sees him faltering He will lift him up so that he does not fall. Your duty is to keep on walking, with sincerity of intention, with taqwa and zikr. Wusul - wasil-bil-Haqq - to be connected to Allah Ta'ala - is His duty. This is the reason the lesson of La-ilaha-illallah Muhammadur-Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is given. This is the summary of the whole Din. The whole of the Din is the commentary of this Kalimah. Both categories, manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha, should be acted on in such a manner that manhi-anha is attained first because it contains in it taqwa, and act on ma'mur-biha together with it. Even if what is mustahab is left out, there is no real harm done but, if taqwa is left out, there is grave damage. If medication is not taken, there is no great harm, but if there is bid-parhezi, then - may Allah save us - it should not be that it leads to demise of the patient.

Yet, what is our condition? We - those who do have some concern - take great care of performing what is mustahab, and we are punctual with our zikr of La-ilaha-illallah, but we have no concern for taqwa.

Hurting others and zikr are contradictory

For example: "Have my words not harmed anybody? Why did I speak in such a manner? Oho! I have hurt his feelings, and he has said so to me as well that his feelings are hurt. So, what type of zikr did my tongue make that it is now causing difficulty to the children of Allah Ta'ala. So, what result has been attained by this zikr that I am making? What result has been attained by this tasbih that I am reciting? What result has been attained by this Durud Sharif that I am reciting? I

am causing taklif to the ummah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and I am causing harm to the bondsmen of Allah Ta'ala, and, with the same tongue, reciting Durud of Muhammadur-Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and I am making the zikr of La-ilaha-illallah. So, what type of tasbih am I reciting?"

Recite tasbih with the intention and the awareness of what you are reciting. Then you will see the effect of it.

If one ponders one will realise, as Allah Ta'ala himself states in the Qur'an Sharif, with great emphasis, that from the whole of creation, there is not a single creation that is not making the tasbih of Allah Ta'ala - the earth, the trees and every created thing is making the tasbih of Allah Ta'ala. If you are also making His tasbih, what great achievement is it when the effect of the tasbih that should come into you, has not manifested itself? The negation - nafi - of everything that was supposed to come with La-ilaha has not come. The effects of affirmation - ithbat - that was supposed to have been established within you by illallah, has not been established. But, never mind, carry on, carry on. It is better that you carry on than not make zikr at all. However, keep the objective in mind.

Why have you become complacent? Why do you sit back contented? What you should be doing is make progress, move ahead with this tasbih, with the above intention in mind. Allah Ta'ala Himself wants you to progress. But you are sitting back complacent, contented with the zikr you are making, satisfied with the Tahajjud you are performing, with the thought that there are no further lessons beyond these. However, you have left off still many lessons.

In quest of dunya and earning a living

I had digressed onto this topic when I was discussing talab (quest). Talab is of two types, one is of Din and one is of dunya. These are two spheres to bear in mind, dunya and akhirat. The one in quest of dunya has been called a dog by Allah Ta'ala. Dunya has been called carrion. The Hadith Sharif states:

الدنيا جيفة و طالبوها كلاب

The dunya is caarion and the ones in quest of it are dogs.

The ones in quest of dunya are called dogs. In this statement it is apparent that it is not befitting the noble status of a mu'min to be in quest of dunya. Yes, we have to earn a living. Earning is necessary. But to be in quest in such a manner that there is no thought of halal and no thought of haram, no thought of purity and no thought of avoiding doubtful items? Why this unconcern? The answer is: it is because these are the demands of being in quest. This is the effect of pursuit that no thought is given as to how the objective is achieved. People say, "Brother, as long as the objective is attained, it does not matter whether it is ja'iz or na-ja'iz, whether it is halal or haram." This is what being in quest demands.

So, Allah Ta'ala has, through the words of His Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) called dunya carrion and the one in quest of dunya a dog. The one involved in earning is not referred to as kasib but the act of earning has been referred to as fardh:

كسب الحلال فريضة بعد الفريضة

It is fardh, but after the other fara'idh. It has been made subservient to the Din. However, we have reversed the order. The subservient has been made the objective and the objective has been made subservient.

So, a mu'min should never bring it to his lips that he is a dunyadar. Just see what Allah Ta'ala has called a dunyadar. How can such words issue from your lips? Being a mu'min and dunyadar? This can never be!

I was speaking about the buzurg who had a female dog which gave birth to puppies. Do you remember? Many topics have been discussed in-between, but let me get back to the qissah. When the dog gave birth to the puppies the buzurg invited all the well-to-do, rich people to a meal to mark the occasion. Seeing that the buzurg had invited them they all accepted and came. Now, this buzurg had a friend who was also a buzurg. As I had previously mentioned, where there is congeniality of temperaments, there one will develop friendship and not at other places. Where the temperaments are similar, there you find people bonding with one another.

It was on the topic of bonding that I spoke about our Tablighi brothers. Their bonding is there all the time. Whenever they speak on a topic, the tabligh bonding will take place. Whenever there is a lecture, the bonding of tabligh will take place. Whenever they speak, they will be speaking in connection with tabligh. They will not speak on any other topic. Neither in their conversations nor in their lectures will they speak on other topics. Why? The reason is that their temperaments have become fully immersed, in depth, and fully grounded in tabligh. They will also not tolerate any other type of lecture. They will also not tolerate reading any other types of kitabs. This is how much they have attached themselves to tabligh. If they read out a kitab, it will be the same one, concerning faza'il and not one of masa'il.

Faza'il and masa'il

Let me tell you what I heard in England. This I heard with my own ears while I was in England. There was an ijtima' in a town called Batley, near Dewsbury. There were huge tents erected there for the ijtima'. I also went to attend. It was on the third day that the jama'ats that had been tashkiled, were about to depart. Towards the end Maulana Inamul Hassan Sahib gave a talk. Thereafter, the Maulana from Gujerat, Maulana Palunpuri Sahib, gave some advice as the jama'ats were about to make musafahah. "Read out faza'il and not masa'il." This I heard with my own ears. There were tablighi friends sitting near me. I turned to them and asked, "What is this that they should read out faza'il and not masa'il?" They explained, "The Tablighi jama'at is composed of people of various schools of thought. By reading out masa'il, there will be dissension. Masa'il differ, so there will be discordance." Agreed, there will be those belonging to the Hanafi Mazhab, the Shafi'i Mazhab, the Maududi group, and so forth. Each will have its own school of thinking. But how can there be differences in discussing masa'il, like the masa'il concerning namaz? Each group will follow its own masa'il. What controversy can there be in this? Yes, there can be problems when discussing masa'il relating to the ahle-bidat and other groups. However, what can be the problem with discussing the masa'il of wudhu, namaz, rozah, and hajj? Yes, there are differences in some masa'il - these do not discuss. There should be no problem in discussing the straightforward masa'il. Nobody will feel offended. What would be the problem in relating three or four mas'alas from the Behisti Zewar or Ta'limul-Islam or Rah-e-Najat?

What I am relating to you is what I heard with my own ears, that the fazai'il from

the compilation of the fazai'il kitab should be read out and not masa'il. It was on this that I said that they have talab, inclination and engrossment to such a degree that they do not tolerate any lecture of any other type. They do not tolerate the reading out of any other kitab as well. They have developed such an attachment to it in their temperaments that there is no room for anything else.

Let me carry on with our qissah: The one buzurg felt attached to the other buzurg. However, this other buzurg was not invited by the buzurg who had invited all the rich people to a meal. When the second buzurg realised that he had been left out, he complained to the first buzurg, "What is this? You invited all the others to a meal and you did not invite me? Did you forget me?" The first buzurg replied, "My dog had given birth to some puppies. To mark the occasion I invited the worldly dogs for the occasion. Whenever my wife gives birth, then I will invite you."

This qissah was related to us by Hadhratwala. He also added, "The buzurg did not look down on them." That is no sheikh who will even contemplate looking down on anybody, leave alone being actually contemptuous of anyone. That is extremely remote. If he should consider himself to be better than others or be contemptuous of others, such a person is not a wali of Allah Ta'ala. A wali is pure of such attitudes. In fact, he considers himself to be worse than everybody else. On occasions, he also confesses, "I take oath on Allah Ta'ala that I consider myself to be worse than a dog and a pig even." This humility is not just lip service, but is a true reflection of his inner self. It is not merely "qal" (verbal statement) but it is a "hal" (inner state). So, why should he call others dogs or cats? The reason is that the wordly people themselves, being Muslim, refer to themselves as such and say, "Aré-bhai, we are the dogs of the world." Because this statement came from their

lips, the buzurg drove the point home to them in their terminology. He did not make the accusation from his side but he merely illustrated what they themselves had said that they are the dogs of the world.

No Muslim who is referred to as a worldly person is not, in actual fact, a worldly person. If he is not a worldly person, then how can he be called a dog? Thus, to call oneself a dog of the world, is strictly forbidden.

It is not permissible to belittle one's ibadat

As is the case with namaz: If anyone performing namaz says, "What is the worth of my namaz? It is merely a ‘namaziah'," then he becomes a sinner. He has belittled namaz. It is lowering the status of namaz. He should rather say, "Alhamdulillah, with the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala I have performed namaz. I have hope that Allah Ta'ala will accept my namaz."

A qissah

Hadhratwala mentioned a qissah: There was a person who used to go and meet an Afghani Pathan buzurg on occasions. Once, when he went to visit him there was another person accompanying him. At the time of making salam and introducing the newcomer, the first person mentioned, "Hadhrat, he is a hafiz as well." The buzurg said, "O, you are a hafiz?" The hafiji replied, "That is what people say." The buzurg said, "What? That is what people say? Are you not a hafiz? Ingratitude! Ingratitude! Why do you not say, ‘Alhamdulillah, with the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala, I am a hafiz'? Why do you not make shukr? Why say, ‘This is what people say'? If somebody were to ask you, ‘Can you see with your two eyes?' will you say, ‘That is what people say'? Do you not know that you have two eyes?"

This is how the buzurg tried to explain to him, that one should live by being a grateful bondsman of Allah Ta'ala.

Whatever "small" blessing one has, even though it may appear small in your eyes, is a greatest of great ne'mat from Allah Ta'ala. How can it be considered to be small? And when one is blessed with the great ne'mat of being a hafiz? Afterwards, whenever that particular hafiz visited the buzurg, he was greeted with the nickname of "Na-shukra" - one showing ingratitude.

One should live as a grateful bondsman of Allah Ta'ala. The namaz that has been performed, irrespective of how it is performed, yet it has been performed. Compare this with so many who have not performed namaz. So, in comparison with them?

Takabbur - and a warning

But for takabbur to develop, and to look at contempt at those not performing namaz? This is a most evil sin. He has developed humility and I have developed takabbur!

It is through the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala, shukr-lillah - this should be one's attitude. One should not cast an eye of contempt on anybody. No matter how much a person has become debased - he is not performing namaz as far as ibadat is concerned, and his activities are licentious and you have seen him with your own eyes involved openly in haram and shameless activities - to think yourself better than him and to look down on him is a sin of the highest magnitude.

And one should be fearful. Why? The Hadith Sharif states that if you have looked with contempt at somebody and you have not quickly made taubah, your death will not come to you until you do not also land up the same as him. What right have

you to look with contempt at anybody? Ponder.

Some ibadat is such that it is contaminated with a very subtle type of impurity that the ibadat is not qabul. It is so subtle that the person performing that ibadat is unable to detect it. And if he is unaware of it and it is present, then how can that ibadat be qabul? We are discussing islah - self-rectification - and the therapy for this illness. Is there any certainty of the ibadat being accepted? If not, then how can one look with contempt at others? How can one consider oneself to be better?

There is a treatment for this illness. It is sufficient to bear in mind the following possiblility: "This mu'min may have some such quality in him that Allah Ta'ala loves; and that I may have some such quality in me that Allah Ta'ala is displeased with. Then, how can I look with contempt at him? What if he is qabul and I am not?" This is the remedy to prevent takabbur from developing and looking with contempt at others.

The difference between a lecture and a majlis

The masha'ikh are there to provide treatment. They are the ruhani physicians. In their lectures, where they relate various illnesses, quoting Qur'anic ayat and Hadith Sharif, different qissas and so forth, they also relate the remedies to the various illnesses. The individual will see if he is affected by one or several of these illnesses. The majlis that is conducted is similar to a consultation in a physician's consulting room. Therefore, mention is made of various illnesses, which does not happen in formal lectures. A lecture is normaly delivered on one subject. The lecture will be limited to one theme only. So, the benefit that is attained by attending a majlis is not attained by listening to a lecture.

That is why Hadhratwala advised towards the end, "Do not deliver lectures. No benefit will be attained from lectures now. When it is announced that a lecture will take place in the masjid, some people will sit down to listen. Some will sit out of politeness, in consideration of the one making the announcement or out of consideration for being a relative. Those who wish to walk away, do so also. Yes, those who come to sit in your majlis, they are fine. They have come with talab. Various topics are discussed in the majlis. Those attending suffer from varying types of illnesses. They have a variety of states afflicting them. So, the varying topics that are discussed will assist these people. A lecture will not bring about this benefit." That is why, in his wasiyat, Hadhratwala said, "Compared to my lectures, my malfuzat should be studied to a greater extent. There will be greater benefit in these." This was Hadhratwala's wasiyat.

Those coming to the majlis should be talibul-'ilm - seekers of knowledge. They should have an open mind, even though they may not have i'tiqad (confidence) in the sheikh. They should not have a rebellious attitude or have antagonism. The latter group will leave more corrupted. Allah Ta'ala knows everything. Allah Ta'ala will cause them to be corrupted even further.

So, those coming with faith and confidence, or coming with an open mind even though they may not have i'tiqad, both will benefit on leaving here, each according to his potential. Some will benefit quickly and some after some delay.

For the talib, the words spoken here and falling into the right ears, even one majlis is sufficient. There is something that I had mentioned just now. The first is the bit of poetry I had recited, keep it in mind. Allah Ta'ala says, "Just see My karam on you. You are contravening My orders and I am feeling ashamed."

Secondly, also keep in mind the statement of the buzurg as related by Hadhratwala: "Why should I obey your orders? You are not my Lord and I am not your bondsman."

For that person who has talab in him and has a temperament which has the capacity to understand, for such a fortunate person just one majlis is sufficient. While sitting here in the majlis, he makes taubah, and he leaves here with a firm resolution, it is apparent that he will traverse three days' manzils in one day. He has developed the enthusiasm - it is as if he is flying in a plane.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the tawfiq. Khuda hafiz.

A BRIEF NOTE ON BROTHER HASSIM BULBULIA (RA)

Brother Hassim was born on the 21st of August in the year 1946 in Fordsburg, Johannesburg, South Africa. He was the 6th child out of 8 children His early school education commenced in Vrededorp and continued at the Bree Street Primary School in Newtown and the Johannesburg Indian High School in Fordsburg.

His madrasah education, like that of his brothers and many others in those days, was very erratic. There was no punctuality in attendance and no great importance was attached to Dini education. Imam Gasant (RA) in Vrededorp was one of his ustadhs.

His father took him out of school when he completed Standard Six and he worked as a storeman for a firm in the centre of Johannesburg.

He lived a carefree life in his youth, making a name for himself as a bass guitarist

in a music band, "The Hoochee Koochees," that became famous in the whole of South Africa,

It was brother Ebrahim Desai, who was active in the Tabligh Jama'at, who caused a turn-about in his life in the year 1968/1969. He and brother Hassim were friends from a young age Brother Ebrahim recalls how he was "a pain in the neck" for brother Hassim with his persistence in giving him dawah. As a result of his coaxing, brother Hassim left the band and got involved in the effort of tabligh. His Dini knowledge, whatever little he had learnt, was very scanty, so he started studying Din again from the very basics. This he did under Qari Abdul Hamid Panoli Sahib in Kerk Street, where Qari Sahib stayed behind the masjid.

The next phase in his life started when Hafiz Salloo Sahib (RA) encouraged him to go to India to further his Islamic studies. In 1971 brother Hassim thus arrived in Jalalabad, India, where he started doing hifz. He decided to come back to South Africa in 1972 just before completing his hifz, in order to get married (1973), and settled in Cape Town, joining the family business, "Knobbs", in Cape Town. He completed his hifz in Cape Town.

In 1975 brother Hassim himself started teaching Din to the neighbours' children at his home, assisted by his father-in-law, Moosa Docrat. The number of children increased rapidly and the house became too small to accommodate them. Bigger premises were needed. A new school had just been built in Rylands in 1976, and the principal, Ismail Waja, was approached for use of the classes. He agreed on condition that permission be obtained from another Muslim group which had approached him first. Alhamdulillah, this permission was forthcoming. This was in 1976. The maktab then grew from strength to strength and other maktabs were

opened as well. At the moment of writing, there are now nine such maktabs running with a total of approximately one thousand pupils.

At the same time, brother Hassim kept up with his tabligh activities, going to the old Rhodesia two or three times and going out locally. With the du'as of Hadhratji (RA), brother Hassim also started taping his majalis and the lectures of visiting 'ulama. He also taped the lectures delivered at ijtimas. As a side-line, he also sold topis and kurtas. His stall was noticeable at all ijtimas and jalsas. He left the family business to do business on his own as he felt that this would give him more time to do Dini work.

He influenced many people, his brother Yusuf in particular. He was instrumental in sending Yusuf to Jalalabad in 1974. The following year Yusuf joined him in the running of the maktabs.

Brother Hassim passed away on the 11th July 2006, after a short illness. He is survived by five children, two sons and three daughters. May Allah Ta'ala fill his qabr with nur.

Chapter No.:

20

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Hadhrat Mawlana Muhammad Masihullah Khan Sahib (RA) was born in Sarai Barlah in the district of Aligarh in the year 1329 or1330 Hijri (1911/1912 CE). Hadhrat's (RA) lineage is linked to the noble Sharwani family of landed nobility, and being linked to Sayyid Hussain Ghauri (RA), the lineage is also Sayyid. Hadhrat (RA) attended the local government school up to standard six, but did not continue with his secular education, preferring to study Din, which he studied initially in his hometown and, thereafter, completing his studies in Deoband. Hadhrat (RA) became bay'at to Hadhrat Mawlana Ashraf Ali Sahib Thanwi (RA), from whom Hadhrat (RA) received his Khilafat. This was in the same year that Hadhrat (RA) qualified from Deoband.

Hadhrat Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanwi Sahib (RA) stationed Hadhrat (RA) in Jalalabad, where Hadhrat (RA) established a madrasah, Miftahul-Ulum, and a khanqah. Salikin who came to Jalalabad for their self-rectification would stay in the khanqah. Hadhrat (RA) passed away in Jalalabad in the early hours of Friday, on the 17th Jamadul-Ula 1413 Hijri. (14th November 1992).

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Dr. Ismail Mangera

P. O. Box 96185

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South Africa

Telephone: (+27) 011 837-5736

E-mail:

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FOREWORD

Alhamdulillah, with the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of our Sheikh (RA) and the du'as of our well-wishers, this booklet, For Friends Number Twenty, is being presented to you. Seeing that there was no booklet of "For Friends" published last year in 2008, I have tried to compensate for this by publishing two majalis in this issue instead of the normal one.

Both these majalis were held in Jalalabad and they were held in Shaban and Ramadhan 1412, corresponding with the year 1992. The significance of this year is that Hadhratji (RA) passed away in the same year in November. These majalis were virtually the last set of formal majalis that Hadhratji (RA) ever held. At this stage Hadhratji's (RA) health was also declining. Despite this, his voice was still very strong. Very few, if anybody, would have thought that this was the last Ramadhan that Hadhratji (RA) would be spending with us in this world.

Seeing that most Dini institutions close in Ramadhan, this is a month where many are free to come to Jalalabad and spend some time there. This is especially true of Dini students and ulema'. The majalis in this month take on a special lustre and nuraniyat, making these majalis stand out even more compared to those of other parts of the year.

Hadhratji's (RA) majalis were not absolutely formal. This is seen very clearly in these majalis, where Hadhratji (RA) tried to interact with the students and ulema'

by asking them many rhetoric questions and getting them to respond to these questions. (In the translation, not all these questions have been recorded as such but have been converted to definite statements for ease of reading. Also, the response of those present has not been recorded as such, also for ease of reading.) Hadhratji (RA) always tried to make his listeners think and not just get them to sit back and merely listen. In this way, the correct concern was created in the listeners. One other point that needs to be emphasised, one that most readers will have already noted when reading the previous issues, is that Hadhratji (RA) made a special effort to teach basic principles and laws. He always emphasised the importance of knowing the basics. Then, using reason and logic, at which Hadhratji (RA) excelled, one could then work out the branches that arose from the basics. Just looking at the details and not understanding the basics would lead to many misconceptions and wrong a'mal. Alhamdulillah, this teaching of his of getting to the basics when confronted by any issue, is seen in those ulema' who graduated from Jalalabad and also in those who had a close affiliation with Hadhratji (RA).

As usual, one's fervent du'a is that Allah Ta'ala should grant us His special blessing by granting us the taufiq to imbibe the valuable lessons contained in these lessons and grant us all the taufiq to act according to these teachings.

Dr. I.M.

Postscript

i)Once again, jazakallah to all those who assisted in the publication of these booklets, especially those who assisted in correcting the translations and assisted

with the typesetting.

ii)It is only correct to point out that we are all indebted to brother Yusuf Bulbulia, who took special care to record the majalis of Hadhratji (RA) whenever he was in Jalalabad. These two appearing in this issue are only some of the majalis that he had recorded. May Allah Ta'ala grant him jaza-e-khair in both the worlds.

iii)Seeing that no booklet of "For Friends" was published in 2008, I cannot promise that future publications will be forthcoming. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to say jazakallah to all those who made donations towards the printing, publication and posting of these booklets. Any donations received in future will not necessarily be used for future publications, as there is uncertainty in this matter.

iv)Back copies of "For Friends" are still available. Cost of postage will be appreciated should requests be received for these.

[THE FIRST MAJLIS IN THIS ISSUE]

[Majlis held by Hadhrat Mawlana Muhammad Masihullah Khan Sahib (RA) in Jalalabad on Tuesday, the 14th Shaban 1412, corresponding to the 8th February 1992.]

[Hadhratji (RA), Hadhrat Mawlana Muhammad Masihullah Khan Sahib (RA) started off by saying:]

I tend to cough quite severely at times…

[At that very moment Hadhratji (RA) was affected by a bout of somewhat prolonged coughing. Hadhratji (RA), on recovering, went on to say:]

Just see! It is not necessary to make such a statement – the evidence is in front of you. However, included in my disclosing it to you is the objective of requesting du'as from you. In disclosing the taklif caused by coughing I am disclosing my helplessness.

You will be making du'a? I am certain that you are making du'a and you continue to make du'a. However, there should be some quest (talab) from my side also. That is why I disclose my condition to you. Otherwise, there was no need to disclose it, as you sahiban are already making du'a, out of muhabbat.

The need for a talib to disclose his condition.

In the same way, it is necessary for the talib (seeker) to disclose his condition to the sheikh. He should not sit back with this idea that the sheikh is aware of our complete state, that he has been aware and remains aware of our condition.

Firstly, this concept is incorrect. Besides Allah Ta'ala nobody has knowledge of the unseen (ilme-gaib) – not even the Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

If, for argument's sake, the sheikh does come to know, then too one should disclose one's condition to him. Also, if some activity of the talib, the murid, the friend, does come into the heart of the sheikh and he comes to know of it, the sheikh will know it only superficially and not in detail. So, whether it manifests to him in a brief form or in a detailed form, when the person is a talib of islah (a seeker desiring his self-rectification), he should disclose his quest (talab). To depend on the knowledge of the sheikh is a very grave and serious mistake.

The proof of this being a great error is absolutely clear. Just see: Allah Ta'ala has the full and complete knowledge of each and every creation as a whole; more

specifically take mankind, and especially Muslims – seeing that, alhamdulillah, Muslims are being addressed at this moment. Does Allah Ta'ala not know the condition of the temperament and the desires of every Muslim? Definitely, He knows! So, should one sit back with this thought, "Allah Ta'ala knows everything, so what shall I say to Him and what should I place before Him? He already knows everything."?

So, has Allah Ta'ala not ordered the Muslims, the believers, to place their requests in front of Him? Or, did He say, "It is not necessary for you to ask anything – I am aware of all your needs. I have fulfilled all your needs and I shall continue to do so. I am aware of the condition of your hearts."? Is this the case? This is not the case. However, what is the order given? "Ask of Me! Become beggars! Present your requests in Our Court! Disclose your desires!" And, if you were not to do so, and you do not speak, Allah Ta'ala is displeased at this. "Oho! You have become very independent! You have become very proud!"

Just see: Mu'min Zate-Bari Ta'ala is desirous of the wishes of that creation, the mu'min human bondsman, that he should disclose his need.

Take the situation of a mu'min Muslim individual: the poor soul is such that that he has insufficient suitable clothes to wear, and he has insufficient suitable food – in fact, he is starving. So, does Allah Ta'ala not have knowledge of this? He definitely does have the knowledge! Therefore, if this mu'min thinks as follows: "Allah Ta'ala knows about my indigent state and starvation. He knows about my clothes as well, what I am wearing. He will send to me. He will send me clothes and food as well." Well and good. Yet, what is the command? Ask! Disclose your needs!

Independence from the creation

The command is to be independent from the creation that, in your heart, there should be no dependence on the creation. However, for the mu'min's heart to be independent of Zate-Haqq…? This is forbidden! If it was not necessary to ask, then Huzure-Akram (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), Sayyidul-Konayn, would not have asked!

Is my voice reaching you?

If it was not required to ask, then he would not have asked. Yet, he asked more from Allah Ta'ala than we ask! Our asking is insignificant compared to the amount he asked. He even knew how much Allah Ta'ala loved him and that Zate-Bari Ta'ala had given him the title of "Habib", the meaning of which is "Mahbub" – one who is greatly loved. While Sayidina Ibrahim (AS) was given the title of "Khalilullah", which means "Muhib" – the friend of Allah Ta'ala – Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was called "Habib". It is also a known fact that the one who loves another will keep the loved one happy. Out of love, he will present gifts to him without the loved one having to ask. Yet, despite the fact that he was "Mahbub", Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) kept on asking time and again, and asked for every type of thing, and would then add:

اللهم هذا دعاء وعليك الإجابة

O Allah! This is my supplication and it is upon You to accept it. (Hadith Sharif)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is saying, "O Allah! Whatever I am asking from You, is my asking. However, to grant these is Your task. All I am doing is asking from You. This is my duty." He is also saying, "To accept the supplication is Your task – according to expediency, according to suitability and in

which there will be safety for me, accompanied by Your wisdom – according to these aspects, You will grant my supplication."

Qabule-du'a has two meanings – the first meaning:
"To grant" – qabul – has two meanings. The one meaning is: "To accept, i.e. the request has been accepted." When the ruler of a state has also shown the words in which the request has to be made and has instructed, "Write down the request in these words", then one knows, beforehand, that the request will be accepted. So, when the request is put forward with the words that the ruler has shown and taught him, then it means that the request has been accepted. So, Allah Ta'ala has commanded us to say as follows:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ وَارْحَمْ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

My Lord! Forgive and have mercy, for Thou art best of all who show mercy. (S.23. A. 118)

رَبَّنَا لاَ تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا

Our Lord! Do not take us to task if we forget or make mistakes. (S.2. A. 286)

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

Our Lord! Give unto us in the world what is good and in the hereafter what is good, and guard us from the punishment of the fire. (S.2. A.201)

رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا

My Lord! Have mercy on both of them as they cared for me when I was little. (S.17. A.24) – For ones' parents.

One can see, as is shown to us at many different places, the words to be used in our requests. So, if the requests are made in those very words, will the requests not be

granted? Definitely, they will be granted. The manifestation (zuhur) of the du’a is a different issue.

However, beware! Should a mu’min ask for haram (forbidden) things? Should one ask for impermissible things? There is no question that this should be done. What should be done is to forward one’s needs, those requirements which are in one’s view. Similarly, there may be other needs which present from time to time. One may ask for these to be fulfilled. Then, these will be accepted.

Remember for always: The request has been accepted at that time when the request was presented. This is the first meaning of “qabul”.

The second meaning:

Now, when will the manifestation of the acceptance take place? How will it take place? Where will it manifest? Three words have been mentioned: (i) When, (ii) where and (iii) how will the acceptance manifest? In the answer is the concept of tafwidh (to entrust), which is also referred to as anjam (result; consequence). And remember very well that tafwidh is the personal right (zati haqq) of Zate-Bari Ta’ala, whereas taslim (to accept) is the right that Zate-Bari Ta’ala has on the mu’min bondsman.

Tafwidh & Taslim

Taslim is to accept the order of Allah Ta’ala. The demand of iman of the bandah is that he should accept, or should he not accept? Definitely, he should accept! By virtue of the iman of the bandah, it is the personal right of Allah Ta’ala on him to accept, to adopt taslim. Tafwidh (to entrust) is the personal right of Allah Ta’ala Himself. It is fardh on the bandah.

Allah Ta’ala states:

وَأُفَوِّضُ أَمْرِي إِلَى اللّٰهِ

I entrust my affairs to Allah. (S. 40. A. 44)

At various places in the Qur’an Sharif Allah Ta’ala has mentioned the state of tafwidh of the Ambiya.

So, tafwidh is to entrust the results and taslim is accept the manifestation of the results. Both of these are the personal rights (zati haqq) of Allah Ta’ala. In adopting tafwidh there is comfort and solace for the mu’min and also tranquility (tusalli, taskin aur sukun).

Thus, du’a definitely gets accepted, but when, where and in which manner, we do not know. This is the meaning of tafwidh. This is the meaning of

وَأُفَوِّضُ أَمْرِي إِلَى اللّٰهِ

Three ways of manifestations of du’a

The du’a may be accepted and manifest in this world in the following two ways:

Firstly, the results are seen according to the item that had been asked for.

Secondly, it may not result in exactly the same way but it is substituted by something else in a different manner.

It may not manifest in the world at all, not at any time and not in any way, in which case, what will happen? “O mu’min, do you acknowledge the existence of this world and not the hereafter?” How will the mu’min respond? “Yes, I do acknowledge the existence of both.” Taubah, taubah! Why should he not acknowledge? If he does not acknowledge, then he does not remain a mu’min.

So, thirdly, the result of the du’a will manifest in the hereafter.

Are you listening?

This answers the question: When? The result will manifest in the hereafter. How will it manifest? It will manifest in the manner that you will benefit – that is the manner in which it will manifest. But, definitely, it will manifest. The du'a has been accepted. The words with which it was ordered, in those words the request was put forward. Now, do not be in anticipation of the result, but adopt tafwidh. There is goodness in it.

The reason that the request was put forward was that of being in need. So, as one is in need in this world, so, in the alame-akhirat (hereafter), one will be many, many, many, many times in greater need. Is that not so? In this world there is some sort of external assistance – somebody or other will come to one's assistance. For example: somebody will come forward and say, "May I press your legs?" And over there…? Who will come to press one's legs? So, compared to here, one will be in greater need over there.

Therefore, Allah Ta'ala, through wisdom and expediency, has taken into consideration his utmost benefit in that world, and has accumulated for him over there. The manifestation will be over there, in the following manner:

Allah Ta'ala will grant him some elevated stages over there. The bandah mu'min will exclaim, "What is all this for? I never did any such deeds to deserve this!" Allah Ta'ala will say, "You carried out an activity – did you not ask for that particular item?" The bandah mu'min will reply, "Yes, I did." "Did you receive it?" "No, I did not." Allah Ta'ala will then say, "I have accumulated it here for you!"

In today's terminology, one would call it putting money in a bank. You know what

a bank is, is that not so? Similarly, Allah Ta'ala will let it accrue over there. One may call it also a "bank" in today's terminology. When money is placed in the bank, you get more than the amount you put in. Here the question will arise whether that additional amount is halal or haram. However, over there one receives double, triple and quadruple. It is stated in the Qur'an Sharif:

[ARABIC] Fay u daaf'ifhu…

So that He may multiply it many times (S. 2. A.245)

Allah Ta'ala will grant him double, triple, quadruple and so forth. What he will receive will be totally and completely pure (tayyib). When the bandah mu'min witnesses what high stages he has attained by adopting tafwidh and taslim in the world at the time that he had asked and did not receive, then he will say, "It would have been better if You had not accepted any of my requests in the world from the aspect of manifestation so that I would have reaped everything here. That was marked for destruction (fani), whereas this is everlasting."

The request had been accepted, but did not manifest in the world. So, what should one do in anticipation of its manifestation?

[The young students sitting in the majlis, to whom the above question was directed, gave a very feeble, indistinct response. Hadhratji (RA) teasingly addressed them.]

What, did you not have breakfast this morning? This is the way I speak to the children. I do not speak scholarly or professorially to them, but more in a light-hearted manner. That is why I ask, "Perhaps you did not partake of breakfast and you are all sitting here hungry, that is why your voices are so feeble?"

So, what should one do with regard to the manifestation? Adopt tafwidh and taslim. Yes, indeed. The duty of the bandah from the aspect of consequences is to

adopt tafwidh.

There is a Farsi couplet which says the following: “We have handed over into Your custody all our wealth, whatever capital we own, whatever is ours, and also what we earn. As for any increase or decrease, that calculation is up to You.”

Is my voice reaching you?

Therefore, You have given the command to perform such-and-such ibadat. Some of the ibadat You have commanded in an unspecified form. Nothing was specified – the number of rakats is not specified and the time is not specified. Some ibadat You have commanded to be performed, both with the number of rakats specified and the time specified. Therefore, taslim, provided that there is no valid excuse. And, what is the meaning of taslim? That one should do it if one wishes and not do it if one feels so? Of course not! Carry it out! Therefore, he carries it out immediately, even though the time was not specified and the amount was not specified. This bandah mu’min has muhabbat for that Zate-Mu’min. Will any mu’min refuse?

And Allah Ta’ala has stated, with regard to ibadat, even though the time has not been specified, even though the amount has not been specified, this being left to the discretion of the mu’min bandah, “You consider your health, to maintain it is fardh. Also, look at your ease.”

Sihhat and sahulat – health and ease/ convenience

“So, take into account your health and your convenience. See that, in contrast, there is no deterioration, no shortcomings, no harm and no damage, in any of your necessary affairs connected to you.”

Is my voice reaching you?

Look at sahulat. You have already seen that you have the health (sihhat), and there are no straitened circumstances for you, and there is no obstruction in carrying out other necessary duties, and you have, in your heart, muhabbat for Allah Ta'ala, and following the demand of that muhabbat, will this bandah carry out the ibadat or not? He will say, "Definitely, I shall carry it out!"

Fahimsahib is saying that definitely he will carry it out. This is a matter that requires fahm (deep understanding). Yes, Fahimsahib is saying – the demands of fahm, he is giving proof of fahm – that definitely he will carry it out.

In actual fact, it is not necessary as far as Allah Ta'ala is concerned, but the demand of his muhabbat is that he will definitely carry out that ibadat.

Have you understood the concept? This is the meaning of taslim. By saying, "Yes, yes," one does not attain taslim. However, demonstrate it by acting on the meaning of taslim. This is real taslim (taslime-haqiqi). Based on the demands of the mu'min's iman this taslim is necessary and compulsory.

Ibadat is of various types

Unspecified ibadat are of various types: One is bodily (jismani), one is monetary (mali), one is verbal (lisani) and one is in the mind / heart (qalbi). For the latter three – mali, lisani and qalbi – there is no time that is specified and no time that it has to be discontinued. However, when it comes to jismani ibadat, i.e. nafl namaz, there are restrictions, that one does not perform this at the time of the rising of the sun, at noon exactly and when the sun is setting. When it comes to monetary (mali) ibadat (which is for assisting the poor and providing them comfort), zikr lisani and

zikr qalbi, there are no such restrictions. It is not said that at the time of sunrise one should not perform these, that at the time of noon one should not perform these and that at the time of sunset one should not perform these. Perform these generally. There is acceptance. Neither is time not specified, nor is there any relationship with quantity, nor is there any relationship with taharat, that one should be with wudhu, nor is there any relationship with facing the direction of qiblah. Complete freedom has been given.

Perpetual zikr and Nisbat

Yes, that is why Zate-Bari Ta'ala has requested certain actions, from the aspect of ibadat, to be perpetual. The heart of the mu'min has become overjoyed at this! This is what his heart had desired! However, how to be able to do this? Permission was required. So, the decree came from over there, although it was not in the category of being wajib (compulsory). From that side Allah Ta'ala has muhabbat for the mu'min; from this side the mu'min has muhabbat for Allah Ta'ala. One claps hands with both hands and not with one hand. This is the meaning of nisbat-ma'Allah. Allah Ta'ala has a bond with the abd and the abd has a bond with Allah Ta'ala. This is the meaning of nisbat – the connection should be from both sides and not from only one side.

To continue: From the aspect of ibadat, some are specified, both as far as the time is concerned as well as the quantity, just like the fardh namaz: the time is also specified and the quantity is also specified. Fardh namaz is an ibadat to be performed for a short period only. Besides namaz, there are other acts of ibadat where neither the quantity is specified, nor is the time specified, nor is there the

necessity for taharat, nor is it necessary to face in the direction of qiblah.

Otherwise, how would it be possible to be in ibadat all the time?

That is why there is a decree from Allah Ta'ala, for the demand of muhabbat is zikr. Allah Ta'ala states in the Qur'an Sharif:

قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ

When you have performed the act of worship, remember Allah standing, sitting and reclining. (S.4. A.103)

This namaz that you have just performed, was an ibadat for a short period only. So, do you now think that, having performed namaz, you are now freed from ibadat? Not at all! The zikr of Allah Ta'ala should continue, whether standing or sitting or lying down. The words used for this are "Yad" (whether verbally or without verbalising), "Dhiyan", "Tasawwur", "Khiyal".

Reciting Durud Sharif

Some people say, "Recite Durud Sharif, recite Durud Sharif, but if you do not have wudhu, how can you recite Durud Sharif? You are reciting Durud Sharif without wudhu? Taubah, taubah taubah!"

Just see how ignorant (jahil) they are! Allah Ta'ala is saying that zikr should be made all the time and the pre-condition of wudhu has not been stipulated. Yet, see what these persons are saying. They are portraying themselves as having a lot of ishq (love for Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). They are not only preventing themselves from reciting Durud Sharif but they are preventing others as well.

May one not bring the Qur'an Sharif, which is the Kalam of Allah Ta'ala, to one's

lips without wudhu? Is it not permissible to recite the Qur'an Sharif without wudhu? Of course, it is permissible. So, Kalame-Ilahi one may recite without wudhu, but salat – meaning Durud – on Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is not permissible? Durud Sharif is also Kalam. Just see how they are deceiving others. And how they try to show that they have ishq and muhabbat! One may take the name of Allah Ta'ala without wudhu but one may not recite Durud Sharif without wudhu…? How can that be? Another point: That which is fundamental – that on which is based everlasting salvation – the Kalimah Tayyibah, one may bring to one's lips without wudhu, and Durud Sharif one may not bring to one's lips without wudhu? What a great deception is this not! They are called great ashiqs! The bid'atis are called great ashiqs!

To continue: Allah Ta'ala is saying:

فَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلٰى جُنُوبِكُمْ

Remember Allah standing, sitting and reclining. (S.4. A.103)

Keep on making the zikr of Allah Ta'ala all the time – while standing, while sitting and while lying down. There is no restrictive condition of taharat. The decree has been given, even though it is not in the category of being wajib. But, brother, how can a mu'min say such a thing? Even though it may not be in the category of wajib in that there will be reproof or punishment if one does not carry it out but, by the demand of being mu'min, by the demand of one's iman, it will be wajib in practice.

Importance of Tahajjud

That is why the ahlullah, who are punctual with their Tahajjud namaz, consider it

to be nafl but, in the performance of it, these ahlullah perform it like a wajib act. Some fuqaha have said that Tahajjud is sunnate-mu'akkadah, but the majority has opined it to be nafl.

Is my voice reaching you?

Allah Ta'ala has also addressed his Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) in his Kalam, in Surah Muzammil, to perform Tahajjud namaz. Yes, initially Tahajjud was fardh. There must have been some special reason that it was fardh. It was Allah Ta'ala's fadhl and His karam (grace and bounty) that the compulsion (fardhiyat) was abrogated but, nevertheless, its status, its position is such that is takes precedence over all other nawafil. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is addressed in Surah Alam-Nashrah:

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانْصَبْ

So, when you have finished, still toil. (S.94. A.7)

Allah Ta'ala is saying, "When you have freed yourself from your duty – that is, from the aspect of your office of messengership, conveying to the creation the laws of Allah Ta'ala, a duty which is carried out in the day and part of the beginning of nightfall, which is the last portion of the day as well – when you have freed yourself, what should you do? 'Fansab'. That is, toil in the latter part of the night in your own, personal ibadat."

Is my voice reaching you? Yes? Very good.

O ye bondsmen! Shall I say it?

[This question was directed at those sitting in the majlis. There was a loud, "Yes!" in response.]

Therefore, from this it can be seen, according to the rules of logic (which you must

have studied in the books of logic), when the Rasul is given an order, it will apply equally to the deputy of the Rasul as well (the na'ibe-Rasul Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Bear in mind that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was all the time in the yad (remembrance) of Allah Ta'ala, in the zikr of Allah Ta'ala, in the dhiyan (contemplation), in the khiyal (thought) of Allah Ta'ala, then too, as far as activity (amal) is concerned, he is being told, "When you have freed yourself from the effort of tabligh, then toil in your personal ibadat of Tahajjud."

Something incidental just comes to mind at this point: From this, one can detect the error of the deviated groups who say, "The namaz you are performing is for show, whereas we are all the time in the remembrance and namaz of Allah Ta'ala." This comment is just incidental.

To continue: What are the ulema' called? They are called the na'ibe-Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). What can one say? When the 'alim stands up to deliver a lecture he extols heaps of virtues concerning the na'ibe-Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Yet, what was the order given to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)? Despite being occupied all the time with Allah Ta'ala, he is being commanded to toil in the latter part of the night in the ibadat of Tahajjud. But, what is the na'ibe-Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) saying? Some say, "We are involved in the composition and writing of kitabs." Others say, "We are involved in teaching Din." They maintain, "We are involved in Dini work all the time and working the whole day leaves us fatigued." So, the na'ibe-Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has discarded Tahajjud. Yes, they will lecture abundantly on the virtues of 'ilm. Yes, there are great virtues in the 'ilm of the 'alim. However, there must be

some status attached to the ’ilm from the aspect of practise and not merely on knowing them and paying lip service.

What is the quality of our namaz?

What shall I say? I feel ashamed to mention it. Never mind Tahajjud , let us take the five times daily fardh namazes: Can it be contrary to the noble station of a na’ibe-Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to perform these regularly with proper wudhu, taking care to carry out the etiquettes and rules of wudhu correctly, to be meticulous about the takbire-tahrimah, the takbire-ula?

Now, make an assessment, O you na’ibe-Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)! O you mudarrasin involved in teaching! O you writers! The preliminary part to what is wajib also becomes wajib. O talaba of the ’ilm of Din! Have you performed your wudhu observing the correct etiquettes of wudhu, with silence, that one should not talk about worldly matters while performing wudhu? Or have you discarded this rule?

When you proceeded to the masjid and entered it to perform your namaz, did you take care to observe the proper etiquettes? Or did you place your left foot into the masjid first, in a careless manner? Was your attitude, “What difference does it make whether one enters with the right foot or the left foot.”? Even before this, when you were proceeding to the masjid, to the Court of Bare-Ilahi, did you proceed conversing with one another? Or did you proceed with khushu’ in your hearts, with awe in your hearts?

Let us scrutinise your gait, the way you walk: there is no khushu’ in this as well, as evidenced by your walking. You are proceeding, but with utmost freedom,

unrestricted. You are busy talking to your friends. There is not the slightest awe or respect, no khauf, no diffidence in your temperament. You are unconcerned as to how you will have to stand when your pre-trial (peshi) takes place, standing in namaz being just that. It must not be that the pre-trial will also be contrary to correct etiquette.

The reason for this being important is that khushu' is wajib for the namaz to be accepted (qabul), even though it may not be wajib for the due performance (sihhat) of the namaz. However, some jurists (fuqaha') have said that khushu' is wajib even for the sihhat of namaz. O na'ibe-Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)! Tahajjud is still a distant matter. First see to your five-times namazes, perform them with the quality and hue they deserve, in their particular times that they have to be performed in, observing all the etiquettes, from the beginning, from takbire-tahrimah, till the final salam.

Is my voice reaching you?

To continue: Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was instructed fa'iza faraghta fansab. So, when you have freed yourself from teaching and writing, will fa'iza faraghta fansab not apply to you as well? O na'ibe-Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), ponder! Make an appraisal! Probe within yourselves! More so seeing that you are talibe-tazkiyah, talibe-suluk, ba-mushtaq-salik. Have you not taken a special stride in your expression of muhabbat? For, this is what we were discussing, that those who have iman have a great passion and love for Allah Ta'ala. For such there are no specifications, especially for those who have placed their feet on the path of suluk.

Suluk is a very important part of Din - Hadithe-Jibra'il (AS)

Suluk is a very important part of the shari'at. It is not outside of the shari'at. It is not excluded from the shari'at. It has a proved position. You must have read Hadithe-Jibra'il (AS)? I feel shy speaking in front of you – you are all scholars (ahle-''ilm). You must have studied Hadithe-Jibra'il (AS) in Mishkat Sharif, which I will explain:

The honoured and illuminating majlis of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was in progress. The Sahabah (RA) were in attendance. Hadhrat-Jibra'il (AS) appeared in the form of a human. He then posed certain questions to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). In logic and philosophy certain questions are posed to ascertain the reality (haqiqat) of issues. The first question was, "What is iman – Mal-iman?" In other words, what is the haqiqat of iman? The second question was, "What is Islam – Mal-Islam?" In other words, what is the haqiqat of Islam? Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) gave the haqiqat of both. Both times Hadhrat-Jibra'il (AS) responded by saying, "Correct!" The Sahabah (RA) were amazed at this. The questioner was not only asking questions, but he was also affirming the correctness of the answers!

In these two questions and answers, beliefs were ratified by the question, "What is iman?" and practise was ratified by the question, "What is Islam?"

The third question – What is ihsan?

Hadhrat-Jibra'il (AS) then asked the third question, "What is ihsan – Mal-ihsan?" In other words, what is the haqiqat of ihsan? So, what is this ihsan? This is Tasawwuf! This is suluk! Without ihsan, a person may have iman, but it is dry and

parched. One has Islam – in other words, a'mal – but Islam, without ihsan, is dry and parched. Iman is also dry and Islam is also dry; aqa'id is also dry and a'mal are also dry.

When one understands what "Mal-Ihsan?" really is and one observes its rights, then there will be moisture in one's iman, there will be freshness and lushness in one's a'mal.

If you are served dry rice, with not a trace of ghi, what will happen? You will say, "Oh yes, he did feed us, but the rice had to be fisted down the throat, it was so dry!" So, you desire some moisture, is that not so? Some people want abundant ghi. I do not know if it still happens nowadays but, previously, when people were invited to a wedding among the qassai, then one person would stand with a jug of ghi and pour it into the food. The guests would cry out, "Pour more! Pour more! Pour more!" This desire for "lubrication" is according to each one's temperament.

So, this ihsan is that wetness, that freshness and lushness. It is that bashashat (cheerfulness/ exuberance) of iman and of Islam. When bashashat appears, then there is no reason for weakness to enter into one's iman and for laziness to creep into one's a'mal. As the bashashat increases, so too will there be an increase in one's iman. There was iman initially and this then increased. This increase then becomes an objective to attain.

لِيَزْدَادُوا إِيمَانًا مَعَ إِيمَانِهِمْ

That they might add faith to their faith (S.48. A.4)

The danger of not having ihsan

The Molvisahiban ask, "What is this suluk? What is Tasawwuf?" One wonders

whether they studied Mishkat Sharif or not. If they have studied it, in what way did they study and which way were they taught? This is a very important part of Islam. Without it, a person may have iman and Islam, but a danger exists. Without suluk, without Tasawwuf, a grave danger exists: one can never say when one stops performing namaz. One can never say when there will be a weakness coming into one's iman. May Allah Ta'ala protect and safeguard us!

Ponder over it.

Coming back to our theme: fazkurullaah qiyaaman… and Fa-iza faraghta fansab. These are addressed to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and also to the na'ibe-Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Subterfuges will not work here. When one has health and there is ease as well that there will be no hindrance to some necessary task, then does the demand of muhabbat say that one must not make Tahajjud? Or, does the demand of muhabbat say that we should execute the task, on a continuous basis?

Qissah concerning Khwajah Baqibillah (RA)

The qissah concerning Hadhrat Khwajah Baqibillah (RA), the sheikh of Mujaddid Alfe Thani (RA), comes to mind. Hadhratwala [Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA)] related this in his majlis. All of this is from there.

The barber came to Hadhrat Baqibillah (RA) to trim his beard and his moustache. When the time came to trim the moustache, Hadhrat Baqibillah (RA) was still busy with his zikr. His lips were moving as he made his zikr. The barber spoke in the simple Urdu spoken in Delhi. Mind you, the Urdu spoken in Lukhnow is very high and eloquent. He said, "Huzur! Please, cut [i.e. stop] your zikr for a little while,

otherwise I may just cut your lip!" This was the terminology the barber used. Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA) related this incident to us. O you salikun! You have set your feet on the path to develop a special relationship with Allah Ta'ala. You heard what the barber said? To repeat: He said, "Huzur! Please, cut your zikr for a little while, otherwise I may just cut your lip!" Hadhrat Baqibillah (RA) responded to this by saying, "For my lip to be cut is acceptable. To cut my zikr is not!"

Do you see? This is the effect of suluk! A question: Is it forbidden in the shari'at to stop making zikr?

So, ponder over it, O na'ibe-Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), especially the salikin. This is suluk. Nowadays, "suluk" exists only in name. Alas! The term suluk rests merely on the recitation of wazifas.

The subject matter of suluk is akhlaq (character) – the elimination of the mean and blameworthy characteristics (izalah akhlaqe-razilah zamimah) is the subject matter of suluk. Some refer to the process as "change" (imalah). I prefer the term "izalah" (elimination) instead of "imalah" (change) because of the following reason: if stinginess and jealousy, two of the blameworthy qualities, do not show in one's actions, then they have been eliminated. Therefore, I use the term "izalah", but the actual term is "imalah".

To continue: If Hadhrat Baqibillah (RA) had to stop his zikr, would there have been any punishment for him? Would there have been any reprimand? Of course not. However, there inside him was something that kept him from stopping his zikr. And that was the following:

[ARABIC] allazeena aamanoo…

الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا اَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلّٰهِ

Those who believe are stauncher in their love for Allah (S.2. A.165)

This appears to be a declarative statement (akhbar), but actually, in its meaning it is a command of Allah Ta'ala (insha). Thus, the meaning of this report would be that there should a great passionate love for Allah Ta'ala. The demand of this passionate love should be to remember the Loved One and not to forget Him.

Some couplets of Sarmad (RA)

Sarmad (RA) has written some Farsi couplets. His mazar [grave] is situated at the eastern door of the Jama' Masjid in Delhi. He reprimands himself:

O Sarmad, stop your lamenting and complaining.

What squabbles have you fallen into?

Stop your lamenting and complaining.

Do one task out of two tasks.

What is this task?

Either entrust your life to Him for His pleasure,

Or turn your gaze away from your Real Friend!

He is saying: Look! That Being for whom you have muhabbat, entrust your life to Him for His pleasure. If you are unable to do this, then how can you turn to both directions? How can you commit this act of shirk? At times you turn to the creation to seek the pleasure of the creation, and at times you turn to the Creator to seek the pleasure of the Creator. How can you turn to both directions? If you are undecided, then turn your gaze away from your Real Friend. End of the issue! How can you be

two-faced? What suits your temperament you do and what does not suit you, you do not do?

Acting on rukhsat is also ibadat

If it is said, “How can we be in the remembrance of Allah Ta’ala all the time? We also have to attend to our personal needs.” The answer is: Depending on the situation and circumstances, Allah Ta’ala Himself has granted permission. Depending on the circumstances, Allah Ta’ala Himself has granted rukhsat (latitude). Granting of these latitudes is in itself a ne’mat. To utilise the latitude on the said occasion is also ibadat.

O ye students! Is my voice reaching you?

For example: There is latitude at the time of illness. At that time, in whatever manner one can perform ibadat, will be to the pleasure of the Friend. There is, thus, no need to think. Take namaz: Qiyam (standing) is wajib in namaz. If one is unable to stand, due to illness, standing is also pardoned (m’af). If one is unable even to sit, then lie down and perform your namaz, using movements of the head to indicate ruku’ and sajdah.

Some latitudes are in the category of being wajib – one has to compulsorily observe the rukhsat. For example: If one has become a musafir (traveller) in shar’i terms, one has to perform two rakats of fardh instead of four. If you perform four rakats then you have sinned.

In this manner, whatever amount that has been specified as being wajib, to exceed this would be impermissible (na-ja’iz). So, why let your gaze dwell on whether there is little or a lot in matters where the amount specified is in the category of

wajib? For example: It is the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala that He has specified two rakats of sunnat and two rakats of fardh for Fajr. If one were to say, "I slept well the whole night. I woke up feeling very much at ease and serene. Today I shall perform four rakats of fardh." This is haram! There has been an alteration in the laws. This performing of only two rakats is not such a latitude that it can be changed.

So, Allah Ta'ala has showered His fadhl and karam on His bondsmen by taking in account the conditions of the bondsmen. On such occasions there is no need to stop and think.

Namaz may be m'af but not zikr

O Ashiqe-Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)! O lovers of Zate-Bari Ta'ala! Take into consideration your health (sihhat) and your ease (sahulat), that there is no harm to you. Also, look at your necessary duties, that they are not neglected.

Although the requisition by Allah Ta'ala may not be at the level of wajib, but the demands of "ashhaddate-muhabbat" is that, in practice, consider it to be wajib. The zikr of Allah Ta'ala should be made continuously, while standing, while sitting and while lying down. And the meaning of zikr is yad bi-harkate-lisan or bi-qirare-qalb (remembrance by the movement of the tongue or by affirmation in the heart).

That is why, dear children, even on the battlefield of jihad, namaz may be pardoned at its time – as it did happen during the Battle of the Trench – but zikr is not pardoned. Even on the battlefield of jihad zikr is not pardoned.

The question arises: Why is zikr not m'af in this situation? The answer is as follows: If the yad of Allah Ta'ala does not remain in the heart, if the dhiyan of

Allah Ta'ala does not remain in the heart, if the zikr of Allah Ta'ala does not remain in the heart then, when waging jihad one will act on the natural passions within oneself and deal with the enemy in whatever way it suits one when confronting him.

Is my voice reaching you? Ay-yuhat-tullab! O ye students! Whatever actions that are carried out, based on natural passions but are contrary to the shari'at, can they be said to be ibadat or non-ibadat? Obviously, the actions will be non-ibadat. Now, why did this non-ibadat occur? The reason is that zikr was not in the heart. The yad of Allah Ta'ala was not in the heart. The reason is that the reality (haqiqat) of zikr is:

كل مطيع الله فهو ذاكر

Every obedient [bondsman] of Allah Ta'ala in activity is a zakir.

Do you see the effect of yad? Do you see the status of zikr? Namaz may be pardoned, as explained above, but, even at that level, zikr cannot be pardoned.

The reality of dunya

That is why it is said that dunya is not the name of being a millionaire or billionaire but the Farsi couplet explains it as follows:

Somebody asked, "What is dunya?"

The answer given was, "O yar, this is no very subtle issue. It is no ponderous matter."

"Oh! We thought it was a very grave issue."

"No, no! It is only this that there should be no negligence (gaflat) in the heart of the yad of Allah Ta'ala, irrespective of whether a heap of silver is placed in front

of you, irrespective of whether a heap of gold is placed in front of you, irrespective of whether a heap of valuable jewels is placed in front of you, irrespective of whether you become the king over the whole world!"

Do you understand? Have you seen the high status of zikr, O ye salikun, O ye talibane-tazkiyah?

Each has its rank and status. One is that of the villager; one is that of the city dweller; one is that of the poor person; one is that of the rich person; one is that of the nawab; one is that of a minister; one is that of the president; and one is that of the king. Kingship has terminated in this era. Sultanate has also ceased, though there may still be remnants somewhere or other, but they also have become playthings in the hands of others. So, nowadays we are left with prime ministers and presidents. In any case, the highest status, from the worldly aspect, is that of a king. There is no higher status.

So, even though a person may become the king of the whole world, but there is no gaflat of Allah Ta'ala in his heart, outwardly he may be a king but he is a faqir. Now, do you understand the reality (haqiqat) of dunya? Allah Ta'ala is not forbidding anybody from being a millionaire or billionaire. A person may not be rich – he may be the poorest of the poor – and there is gaflat in his heart, then that kingship is better than this poverty. To repeat: that kingship of the whole world, without a trace of gaflat, is better than this poverty where there is gaflat in his heart.

Who is preventing you from pursuing agriculture? Who is stopping you from trade and commerce? Who is stopping you from seeking employment? Who is preventing you from attaining skills, artisanship and industries? However, yes, it

should be subservient to the shari'at.

On the other hand is that 'alimsahib who is involved in teaching, but his heart is devoid of yad and he is in gaflat… Well, what can one say? May as well carry on teaching.

Qissah concerning Hadhrat Khwajah Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki (RA)

An incident mentioned by Hadhratwala comes to mind.

Hadhrat Khwajah Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki (RA), who was the khalifah of Hadhrat Khwajah Mu'inuddin Chisti (RA), had just passed away. He had made a bequest that his Janazah namaz should be performed by that person who had the following qualifications:

"My Janazah namaz should be read by that person who was has been with wudhu all the time.

"My Janazah namaz should be read by that person who has never missed the takbire-tahrimah.

"My Janazah namaz should be read by that person who has never missed the sunnat namaz that is read before the Asr namaz.

"My Janazah namaz should be read by that person who has never involved himself in nazare-bid. (That is, he has never cast lustful glances at gair-mahrams.)."

After having made these four bequests, he passed away. Having made the mayyat ready, it was now time for the Janazah namaz. The trustee, to whom the bequests were made, came forward and announced the bequests made by Hadhrat Khwajah Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki (RA). Nobody stepped forward, even though his khulafa' were present. It is a different matter that the status of the khulafa' may be

higher but, it could be possible that, before become khulafa', these qualities were not in them.

The announcement was made three times in a loud voice. It was the era of Sultan Shamshuddin Altamash (RA). To everybody's surprise, he himself, the king, stepped forward. He said, "Alhamdulillah, shukran-lillah, I am such a person. I am stating this purely because we have been told to express our gratitude for our blessings – 'wa amma bi-ne'mati fa-haddith.'"

Who was this – a poor person or a king? He was a king! Imagine the good character a king must have. Also, he had these four qualities, that he was with wudhu all the time, that he had never missed making namaz with takbire-tahrimah, that he had never missed performing the four rakats sunnats before the Asr namaz and he had not been guilty of nazare-bid. This is even more remarkable taking into account that there must have been laundis in the palace and he had to carry out all the duties of a sultan. Despite being a king, he was a faqir.

Ponder over it.

What do we see over her? Despite being a faqir, takabbur (arrogance) has not been eliminated. Whereas, over there, despite being a king, he had an extreme sense of awe and humility. He did not gaze with contempt at anybody and he did look at himself as being high and mighty.

Ponder over it, O ye salikun, O ye honourable ulema' and mudarrasin. By the teaching of virtues, have you come to understand the question and answer? What is dunya? It is to be negligent (ghafil) of Allah Ta'ala.

So, when there is a general requisition that whichever mu'min who claims to have iman, the demand of this claim is: "ashaddu-hubbulilllah," that he has a great

passionate love for Allah Ta'ala. The demand of this passionate love for Allah Ta'ala is that the mu'min should be in His yad all the time and not to be in gaflat. You now know the crux of life that it is the yad of Allah Ta'ala.

The role of the Qur'an Sharif for the Ashiq

There is another Farsi couplet which explains this very nicely:

The questioner asked, "O, one who understands the Kalame-Haqq, just explain what is the Qur'an?" This person replied, "Aré yar! My dear friend! Don't you know the answer that you are asking me?"

Allah Ta'ala, the Knower of the unseen, knows that His mu'min bondsman, who has brought iman on Him, will have muhabbat for Him. And the demands of this muhabbat are that he will have the desire to speak to Him also and see Him also. Is that not so? Think! Contemplate! Ponder! All this is present in the Qur'an Sharif. This is a teaching lesson taking place.

To continue with the reply given, "Aré, is this a question to ask that you are asking me? Very well, listen! It is for the mu'min to be able to see the Face of the Rabb of mankind."

The mu'min has a great, passionate love for Zate-Bari Ta'ala. Where there is a great, passionate love – which is referred to as ishq in our terminology – the demand of this love is to see the One who is loved. Is that not so? Also, there is a desire to speak to the One he loves. Is that not so? The connection that exists between Zate-Bari Ta'ala and this mu'min bandah, and the connection that this mu'min bandah has with Zate-Bari Ta'ala, is to be able to see one another. However, how can the mu'min bandah see Zate-Bari Ta'ala in this world with

these eyes? Even Hadhrat Musa (AS), who spoke to Allah Ta'ala, was told that he could never see Allah Ta'ala in this world.

Besides wanting to see Zate-Bari Ta'ala, there is a desire to speak with the loved One. This is also not possible in this world for this mu'min bandah. That is why Zate-Bari Ta'ala has revealed His Kalam as a substitute for speaking directly to Him. By reciting His Kalam, one is conversing with Him. This Kalam is the secret communication with Him. By reciting the Kalam, one is speaking with Him and one is seeing Him as well. There is mutual visualisation as well as mutual conversation. Therefore, Allah Ta'ala has kept His didar and His speaking in this Kalam, the Qur'an Sharif. Allah Ta'ala is virtually saying, "If you want to see Me, look at this Kalam; if you want to speak to Me, recite this Kalam."

We were saying – our theme has been – that the demand of ashadde-muhabbat of the mu'min is to be in the zikr of Allah Ta'ala all the time. The time is not specified, taharat is not specified, facing the qiblah is not specified and the etiquettes to be observed in a majlis are not specified. So, whenever you wish, in whichever manner you wish, as much as you wish, converse with Him. Provided that there is no harm to your health and there is ease.

Summary of the majlis

Let me explain it in another way: It is an open fact that one has two hands; one has two feet; and so forth. Most of our body parts are in pairs. However, one has only one tongue and only one heart. And Allah Ta'ala is, how many? Only One! Allah Ta'ala is trying to convey a message to us: "I am One; you have one tongue; so that one tongue is for My zikr. Again, I am One; you have one heart; that one heart

is for My yad.” Thus, the tongue and the heart have now become the special preserves for Zate-Bari Ta’ala. Therefore, the tongue should not be free of the zikr, and the heart should not be empty of the dhiyan of that One.

According to the philosophers, it is not possible for there to be “emptiness”. (Any container always contains something, even if it only air.) Therefore, it is not possible that the tongue of a mu’min can be empty of zikr and the heart can be empty of dhiyan.

That is why Allah Ta’ala, through the tongue of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has stated:

من كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الاخر فليقل خيرا او ليصمت

“That person who has brought iman on Allah and the day of Qiyamat” – what are its demands? – “when he speaks, he should utter goodness” – and this will become ibadat – “otherwise he should remain silent.”

Thus, to speak is also ibadat and to remain silent is also ibadat. The reason is that, when he speaks, he does so subservient to the command. When he remains silent, he does so subservient to the command. It is subservient to the command that he has tranquility in his heart and tranquility of the tongue. Do you see what ibadat is? Silence is also ibadat and speech is also ibadat.

We do have permission to speak. When we speak, it should be goodness. The heart has permission to be in motion – that is, we have permission to ruminate and ponder – but it should be with His dhiyan. If the tongue moves it should be with His Kalam and His nam; and if the heart moves it should be with His dhiyan.

This is the demand of:

والذين امنوا اشد حبا لله

Du’a

May Allah Ta’ala, out of His grace and bounty, grant us the taufiq to practice accordingly.

Khuda hafiz.

[P.S. Kindly note that Hadhratji (RA) had mentioned on several occasions that zikre-lisani is not permitted when answering the call of nature, when naked and when having marital relations.]

[THE SECOND MAJLIS IN THIS ISSUE]

[Majlis held by Hadhrat Mawlana Muhammad Masihullah Khan Sahib (RA) in Jalalabad on Tuesday, the 4th Ramadhan 1412, corresponding to the 10th March 1992.]

[Hadhratji (RA) was coughing just prior to starting the majlis. Coughing occurred at intervals during the talk.]

One’s health suddenly changes. Fifteen to twenty minutes prior to this, I was well and I was busy doing my work. Then I had the urge to urinate and I went to relieve myself. When I came back, I suddenly felt very weak. This happens at times. As it is, I am weak already, and the weakness then increases. Then my breathing becomes difficult. I am stating this merely for your information. I am also mentioning this so that you will make more du’a. That is, I am requesting your du’as. Otherwise, time is very precious.

That item on which Allah Ta’ala has taken a qasm (oath), that item will be of great value, it is to be highly valued and it is to be quested, each at its level.

Nafse-Ammarah, Nafse-Lowwamah & Nafse-Mutma'innah

Allah Ta'ala has not taken a qasm on Nafse-Ammarah, has he? However, He has taken qasm on Nafse-Lowwamah:

وَلاَ أُقْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ

No, I swear by the reproaching soul. (S.75. A.2)

Therefore, Nafse-Lowwamah is also something to be valued very highly. Allah Ta'ala becomes very happy from the aspect that it indicates progress. Further on is the Nafse-Mutma'innah – the nafs which has tranquillity, life filled with tranquillity.

Nafse-Lowwamah will be called such when, having made some mistake, having committed some indiscretion, this bandah feels ashamed and he reproaches and censures himself; his temperament feels shy to communicate with Haqq Ta'ala; he has a sense of shame; he is contrite. Then Allah Ta'ala feels extremely happy, especially seeing that this bandah has not seen Allah Ta'ala.

Has anybody seen Allah Ta'ala with his eyes in this world? Hadhrat Musa (AS) had even made the request to allow him to see Him. Allah Ta'ala replied that he could not see Him.

To continue: Allah Ta'ala becomes extremely happy. Allah Ta'ala is virtually saying, "Without seeing Me, this is how he believes in Me, as it should be when one has brought iman. Just see how an amazing bandah is this! He has not even seen Me, yet he considers Me to be Omniscient and Omnipotent, and he is turning to Me without having seen Me! What an excellent bandah is he not! He is giving evidence of possessing an uprighteous intelligence and a temperament that is right-minded. The manner in which he is reproaching himself and censuring himself, the

manner in which he is shamefacedly making taubah, as if he is seeing Me, and telling himself, 'Allah Ta'ala has seen this action of mine.'"

So, such verifications, such effects, such signs, such tokens have brought about a conviction in his heart that, without seeing, he has accepted that he has seen. Just as somebody would feel ashamed of saying something vulgar if he is being watched, is that not so?

So, over here, without seeing, his conviction is greater than if he had seen. Allah Ta'ala is virtually saying, "He has seen My manifestations, My tokens and My signs, My proofs and My substantiations that are present in this universe on a Divine basis (takwini) and his uprighteous intelligence, with a temperament that is right-minded, have believed Me to be Omnipresent and Omniscient as if he has actually seen Me. That is how ashamed he feels. He is turning towards Me with repentance. He is penitent. He is returning to Me."

Allah Ta'ala is very happy with him. Allah Ta'ala is extremely happy with him. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had also said that those who make istigfar – those who repent – will be in his company. The du'a appears in the Hadith Sharif that, just as the muqarribin – those who are close – will be in his company, those who make istigfar will also be in his company.

Allah Ta'ala has also stated in a Hadith Sharif (Hadithe-Qudsi) in direct reference to such sinners: "O you believers! Who is there amongst you who are not sinners? And the best of sinners are those who make taubah (who repent)."

Allah Ta'ala is virtually saying, "Oh, so, you consider yourself to be without sin? Do you think you can perform ibadat in accordance with My status and majesty? Do you think that you are able to save yourself from sins from the aspect of My

status and majesty? If you are unable to, then why is there this ujub (conceit)? Why is there this takabbur (arrogance)? I see: By making ibadat continuously, you consider that it is your own personal perfection! That is why you are now conceited!"

Is my voice reaching you?

"Is that it that you do not think that it can be snatched away? In the excellence that you have, in the meritorious deeds you perform and in saving yourself from evil, you consider these to be your personal achievements? Ujub has entered into you. You do not feel that they may be snatched from you? And if there is the danger of these being snatched from you, how can takabbur develop within you?"

The difference between ujub and takabbur

Ujub is that aspect that the gaze is on oneself. "The abstention from sins and the performance of ibadat comes from my personal effort, that it is my personal quality." This is when ujub (conceit) enters. The person is infatuated with himself. His gaze is focused on himself.

This illness progresses further. Your gaze falls on that poor soul who is involved in sins, who is involved in disobedience. You look at him with contempt. Oho! Takabbur has also now entered.

Do you now understand the difference between ujub and takabbur?

"Kullukum-khatta'un" Each one of you is a sinner. You are not reproaching yourself? You are not bringing yourself to repent? Are you refraining from making taubah? Why are you refraining? The reason is that you do not consider yourself as one who has sinned, one to be sinning. You have this thought, "I have never

committed sins. I am not one to commit sins.” Allah Ta’ala is displeased to an extremely high degree with such a sinner.

True taubah

That bandah who does not attribute goodness to himself and he does not look disdainfully at others; he is engulfed in inebriating perspiration in utter contrition, and reproaches himself continuously, asking him himself, “How could I have such thoughts?” he is said to be making true taubah.

Haqq Ta’ala says, “Kullukum khatta’un”: Everyone from amongst you is a sinner and has sinned. This is something one should keep in the forefront. Yes, when the bandah keeps this in front of his vision and he reproaches himself, he censures himself; he becomes ashamed; he becomes remorseful; he is engulfed in a heavy sweat; then he is said to be making real taubah. Without remorse, taubah is not taubah.

What is your position now? Just now, now you were from the ashrar, from the khatta’un (sinners); now, even now, you have become one of the akhyar (the virtuous; the saintly)!

What do you understand by this? Let me repeat: Just now, now you were from the miscreants, from the ashrar, filled with conceit and arrogance, and when you were engulfed in a heavy sweat out of remorse – what is called true remorse and taubah – then you became one of the akhyar. All of you. “Kullukum” is plural.

Do you understand the point?

Just see! Look at the karam (bounty) of Allah Ta’ala! Just now you were sharir (wicked), and now you have become khayr (good)! Just now you were from the

ashrar, now you have become one of the akhyar! Just now you were from the ashrar, now you have become one of the abrar (saintly)!

إِنَّ الأَ ْبْرَ ارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ

The righteous truly will be in delight. (S.82. A.13)

Just now you were from those deserving of qehr (wrath) and now you are from those deserving mehr (dowry)! Take note of the words being used.

To continue: We have come to know that taubah is a very precious quality in the eyes of Allah Ta'ala. Repentance and remorse are very precious qualities, because you are reproaching yourself. You are now at the level of Nafse-Lowwamah. And Allah Ta'ala has taken qasm on Nafse-Lowwamah. And that which Allah Ta'ala has taken qasm on is something to be valued. And whatever is of value is something worthy of talab (quest for; search for and obtain). It follows that taubah is worthy of talab in the eyes of Allah Ta'ala, and it is to be valued. That is why qasm has been taken on Nafse-Lowwamah. Therefore, the Nafse-Lowwamah of the mu'min is to be valued.

Is there such a mu'min who, within himself, sooner or later, does not feel remorseful at having sinned openly, leaving aside the sins committed secretly? Thus, if a sinner, having committed sin upon sin, appears in front of a pious person, how do you know that he has not made taubah? One should think well of others – have husne-zinn – and one should say to oneself that he has repented and, if so, he is of the abrar. This may not be within your knowledge but, in principle, this should be within the scope of your knowledge.

Therefore, you should not gaze with contempt at any mu'min sinner. When you are not supposed to look contemptuously at such a mu'min, then, for you to consider

yourself to be better than him and for you to look at him with contempt, you have descended to the group of ashrar, whereas he is among the abrar! Allah Ta'ala is virtually saying, "Outwardly, he appears to be among the ashrar in your eyes, but he is among the abrar in My eyes. And you may appear to be among the abrar in your own eyes but, O abrar, you are among the ashrar in My eyes!"

What do you understand? May Allah Ta'ala make it that understanding comes to our minds. These are aspects and hues. Have you understood the points made?

كلكم خطاؤون وخير الخطائين التوابين

All of you are sinners; and the best of sinners are those who make taubah.

Shaitan's tricks and how to combat him

After making taubah – having become repentant – he now takes a vow within himself not to sin in the future, Shaitan comes and tries to influence him, "Why are you taking an oath? Wait awhile and then see. Wait till tomorrow and then see if your vow remains intact or not." Shaitan has come and he is firm in his argument. The mu'min is firm on his resolution and the mu'min should overcome the evil one.

If such a thought from Shaitan enters the mind that he is trying to prevent the mu'min from making taubah, and he is placing such waswasah (whisperings) into his mind, he should then address Shaitan fearlessly and boldly, "Fine! When the time comes, I'll see. At this moment it is my vow to abstain from sin in the future. Should I break my vow, I'll cross that bridge at that time. However, at this moment in time, my vow is firm! Were I to act contrary to my vow we'll see to it at that time. What will there to be seen? The following: You, O Shaitan, also committed a

crime but you were not remorseful. You have seen me that I have committed sins. I admit to it. However, you have seen that I do become remorseful. I also become ashamed. I also reproach and censure myself. So, – Allah forbid! – should I fall into sin again in future, my nature is such that I will feel remorseful again and I shall make taubah again."

However, merely to make istigfar with the tongue is not sufficient. Until you do not feel remorse within yourself, until you do not reproach yourself, just to say, "Astagfirullah, astagfirullah, astagfirullah," is not enough. On the other hand, even if you do not verbally say, "Astagfirullah," but you have in your heart all the features of istigfar, if remorse and being ashamed are present, then istigfar has been made. This is the reality (haqiqat) of the life of a mu'min.

One should have knowledge of the haqa'iq and ma'arif – the deeper realities and cognisances. Then you will become of the ahle-haqq and the ahle-ma'rifat. It is very necessary to have knowledge of the haqa'iq and ma'arif. Then you will be said to be of the ahle-haqa'iq and the ahle-ma'arif.

Valuing (qadr) and questing (talab) and the Akhirat

To continue: There is great value attached to time. Therefore, it is worthy of questing (talab). One can say that when an item is valued, it is sought after. If something is not valued at all, will anybody seek it? Just take the worldly people (dunyadar): Do they not value wealth? Definitely, they do. Therefore, the degree to which they attach value to wealth, to that degree will they seek it. Is that not so? The sequence is as follows: First, one attaches a value to it and then one will seek it.

In the same manner, the concept of Akhirat that is in one's mind will be valued as such. To that degree will there be a quest for it. What is of worth, that is worthy of been sought for. Therefore, if the Akhirat is valued, then it will be sought for accordingly. Thus, when it is worthy of being sought, then the intermediary means, the resources, the wajibat and the pre-conditions pertaining to the Akhirat, will all be valued in one's heart.

Therefore, the talib will meticulously search for all the pre-conditions, the means, the resources – each and every single one – for he has now developed the talab. That is why he is not prepared to leave out even the very minute aspects, even though their size is that of an atom:

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ

And whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it. (S.99. A.7)

Even though the means are the equivalent of the size of an atom, the smallest of the small, he will not let it pass because it is goodness (khair), and it will be khair in the Akhirat. He is not prepared to discard that khair. He is not willing to leave off that khair unless there are some forced circumstances, some constraints present. Then it would be an exception. Otherwise, on his own volition, he has no wish to discard it. Thus, even though the khair is at the level of an atom, it also has value in it.

Do you understand the points made?

When the khair at the level of an atom is valued, the khair that is at an intermediate level and the khair that is at the higher level – the question of discarding these does not arise at all!

So, such a mu'min, who has a sense of values, a talib of value, will he ever discard

namaz, that namaz which is fardh and that namaz which is wajib? Never mind leaving these, he will not even leave those namazes which fall in the category of mandoop (encouraged) and mustahab, which are referred to as nafl.

Yes, should he be helpless, should there be some forced circumstances then, very well, he is helpless and constrained. However, of his own will, he will not discard these in the situations where he is neither so physically weak, nor so ill, nor is there difficulty in his journey.

Do you understand?

Latitude (rukhsat) and loftiness (azimat)

In a particular situation Zate-Bari Ta'ala may have given latitude (rukhsat) but he will act at the higher level (azimat). What do you understand? To explain: When on a journey, the latitude (rukhsat) given allows one not to perform the namaz that is sunnate-mu'aqqidah. However, this talib looks at the ease and, seeing that there are no difficulties, he feels absolutely dismayed at not performing it.

Do you understand?

Yes, if some constraints, some forced circumstances present themselves, then he will take benefit from the ne'mat (blessings) of Allah Ta'ala's rukhsat (latitude). He will make shukr. His muhabbat for Allah Ta'ala will increase. He will say, "Wah, Allah Ta'ala, wah! This is Your bounty! The life that I have is from You. If some difficult conditions were to be encountered, what would it matter? However, O Allah! The love that You have for my life…"

Shall I tell you? Yes? Well, then I will: "O Allah! The love that You have for my life is greater than the love that I have for my own life! O Karim! O Jawad! O

Gaffar! You have greater love for my life than I have. What latitude have You not given! You have decreed, 'If you are ill and weak, do not stand and perform your namaz – it should not happen that you suddenly feel dizzy and fall. Sit or lie down and read. Besides the fardh and wajib, you have been given rukhsat not to perform the other namazes. You may feel that there is ease. However, you are on a journey and you do not know whether the ease will remain or not, whether it will continue or not.'"

The muhabbat for Allah Ta'ala continuous to increase in the heart of the mu'min when he sees these blessings. This is the demand of the aqale-mustaqim, fehme-salim and a temperament that is salimah (a mind that is level-headed, an understanding that has depth and a temperament that is accommodating.)

Has Allah Ta'ala not shown Himself to be Muhsin (a Benefactor)? Has He not shown Himself to be Mun'im (One Who grants favours)? Should the muhabbat for such a Muhsin and Mun'im increase or decrease?

Therefore, the question to ask is, keeping these blessings in view, why is the muhabbat that the mu'min should have for Haqq Ta'ala not increasing? Why has ashadde-muhabbat not entered? Why is ashadde-muhabbat still not entering?

And, what are the demands of ashadde-muhabbat? Answer: The mu'min looks at hints. He looks at intimations. He assesses the emotional make-up (mizaj). He then brings into practice according to the guidelines obtained from these. That being the case, how can he discard nafl? Performing nafl would be the effect of an increase in muhabbat, and his a'mals give evidence of this.

Why is the Akhirat worthy of being valued?

So, the Akhirat is worthy of being valued in the heart of the mu'min. Why is it worthy of being valued? The reasons are that the Akhirat is lasting and it has only khair (goodness) in it. Its duration is for eternity. Life in it is immortal. There is nothing but goodness in it. So, in the heart of the mu'min, why should the Akhirat not be valued in comparison to this world?

When one is confronted by two opposing issues, it is necessary to search for the issue that takes priority, to see which of the two has to be given prominence. When a new situation presents, when two alternatives present, which of the two should be given precedence? Look carefully to see which of the two is worthy of giving pre-eminence. Of the two, one is temporary and perishable (fani), whereas the other is everlasting and non-perishable (baqi bi-khulud). The one that is fani is not free of evils, whereas the one that is baqi has no trace of any evil. Therefore, the latter will be given pre-eminence because it has permanence and only goodness in it, and not the former which is opposing it and which is fani, such a fani which is not free of evils.

So, is this world, this dunya, worthy of giving pre-eminence or is the hereafter worthy of giving pre-eminence? It will be the hereafter. So, when the hereafter is worthy of pre-eminence and this dunya is not to be given pre-eminence, which tasks should be one's objectives in attaining success? Should one's success not be in following the methodology for the Akhirat, in utilising the means for the Akhirat and adopting the compulsory methods for the Akhirat? Or in discarding these?

Formula for success – initially there is fatigue

When, in your minds, the Akhirat has become pre-eminent, nurture it. When the Akhirat has attained a high value and has become worthy of being sought after, then Allah Ta'ala states that the pre-conditions and the means to attain Akhirat consist of carrying out three things, and to save oneself from going contrary to these three things.

In the very beginning, O mu'min, by virtue of you being a mere human with human frailties, you will experience fatigue. However, seeing that you have already given pre-eminence to the Akhirat on the basis of its value and it being worthy of attaining, you will tolerate the fatigue that presents initially. You will bear the burden of toil that presents initially. You will persevere until, by continuous exertion – what is the word in English? "Practise?" – by continuous practise, what will it become? The exertion will disappear and a stage will be reached when your liver will be rent apart, your liver will erupt, if you were to discard that performance. At this stage that exertion that was part of your temperament, has now become part of your nature.

Allah Ta'ala is stating that there are two concepts which He is placing in front of you. One is "tazkiyah" and the other is "tazakka".

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

He who purifies himself is indeed successful. (S.91. A.9)

This was discussed briefly yesterday. In attaining this purification, there will be toil, there will be fatigue initially. However, by degrees, slowly, slowly, slowly, because it is of value and it being worthy of being pursued, it will not remain as zakkaha, but it will be:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّىٰ

He who has attained purification is indeed successful. (S.87. A.14)

So, initially there is tazkiyah and finally there is tazakka. That tazakka for the Akhirat was initially tazkiyah and finally became tazakka, that is, it became part of his nature.

Three things commanded by Allah Ta'ala

What are those three things commanded by Allah Ta'ala, the three things which have to be carried out continuously, to continuously refrain from discarding them and to make them part and parcel of one's nature? They are:

Firstly: قد أفلح من تزكى

In this first one are the two aspects explained just now: tazkiyah and tazakka. That person has reached his goal, that person has succeeded, who has achieved tazakka.

Secondly: وذكر اسم ربه

And the one who has made zikr of the name of his Rabb.

Thirdly: فصلى

And has performed namaz.

All three have to be performed punctually and continuously.

Do you understand what the first item is? It is tazkiyah. The meaning of tazkiyah is to abstain from beliefs (aqa'id) which are "filthy" (ghabith) and a character (akhlaq) which is "filthy". The word "tazkiyah" means "to cleanse" and is derived from the word "zakat", which means "paki" (purification/ cleansing).

From this it is apparent that he has some impurity (na-paki) in him. If he was pure from beforehand and there was no trace of impurity in him, why has Allah Ta'ala

stated:

قد افلح من زكيها

Tahsile-hasil (superfluity) explained

Are you madrasah graduates listening? Do you understand the reasoning? Ponder over it!

Let me explain it this way: If a child is mischievous, he will be told, “Don’t be mischievous!” If he is not mischievous, why should one tell him, “Don’t be mischievous!”? According to the rules of logic, it would be superfluous to instruct someone to obtain what is already in his possession. You have studied logic?

Let me give you another illustration: I have some Rupees in my hand. Somebody tells me, “Go and obtain some Rupees!” I now transfer the Rupees from my right hand to my left hand and then back to my right hand from my left hand, then will this be a mockery or not? I already possess Rupees and for me to be then told to obtain Rupees, would be superfluous.

Do you now understand the logic? The brothers from London, do you understand Urdu or not?

The above illustrations demonstrate the concept of something being superfluous (tahsile-hasil), which is prohibited on theoretical grounds.

Yes, if a person has what appear to be Rupees, but they are counterfeit, then one may tell him, “Obtain some Rupees.” If he says, “But I do have rupees,” then he will be told, “Obtain some genuine Rupees. Show the ones that you have to somebody who is an expert in this field and you will then see that what you have is counterfeit and not genuine Rupees.” So, he does not really have money. He will

then be told to replace the counterfeit money for genuine money. Then only will he be said to have money.

Similarly, a person may say, “I have iman.” Arè! You have iman? First, have a look at those with beautiful iman, those with iman of a high quality, then you will be able to gauge whether you have iman in you or not. Arè! You are mistaking counterfeit iman for genuine iman. You are calling tainted iman pure iman. Replace it, because you do not possess true iman. The aim is to possess true iman. Do you now understand the point concerning superfluity (tahsile-hasil)?

What has Zate-Bari Ta’ala said? He stated that successful is that person who has achieved tazkiyah. It follows that that he has no tazkiyah in him as yet. Zate-Bari Ta’ala is directing his attention in the direction of tazkiyah. What was that which I had said was contrary to tazkiyah? It was corrupt aqa’id which were in you. Remove these corrupt aqa’id and instill the proper category of correct aqa’id in you. Eradicate the corrupt beliefs and replace them with superb, exquisite and fine aqa’id. One’s temperament, one’s being has to be purified from corrupt aqa’id. This aspect is related to the heart. The heart has to be cleansed of corrupt aqa’id. This was the first point.

This second aspect is also related to purity (paki). What is that? It is to cleanse oneself from ill behaviour (ghabithe-akhlaq). Just as aqa’id are related to the batin, similarly akhlaq is also related to the batin, and not to the limbs and organs of the human body. The locus of iman is the heart and the locus of good character is also the heart. Both are, thus, connected to the batin (internal) and not to the zahir (external).

That is why Zate-Bari Ta’ala commanded that one should cleanse oneself from

corrupt aqa'id and cleanse oneself from a corrupt akhlaq. This is fardh. This is the basis for success. This is the reason that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) established pure beliefs in place of corrupt beliefs, this being referred to as iman. Thereafter, the corrupt habits that were in the Arabs of that time were embellished with ne'mal-badl – a better substitute, namely, akhlaqe-hasanah, akhlaqe-hamidah, akhlaqe-pakizah, akhlaqe-suthre, akhlaqe-munazzah [These are different terms used to describe different aspects of a good character – Tr.]

It required thirteen years of effort to establish these good qualities in the Sahabah (RA). Otherwise, what was the need? Corrupt beliefs were eliminated in one minute and replaced with correct and pure beliefs. But one minute was not sufficient to remove the corrupt akhlaq which was firmly embedded in the Arabs. It required the duration of the Makkan era, thirteen years, and not just a few minutes, to remove this.

To remove and purify corrupt aqa'id only a few minutes or a few hours are required. However, how can one hour or a few hours, one day or four days be sufficient to remove a corrupt akhlaq? For this, an extremely high degree of forbearance and sabr need to be established, then will a corrupt akhlaq be eliminated and a purified akhlaq attained.

Do you understand?

We are still discussing the first command of Allah Ta'ala, namely tazkiyah. For attaining success for the valued Akhirat and for the quest of Akhirat, one has to terminate corrupt beliefs and also free oneself from corrupt behaviour.

Still expanding on this, let us take the case of the mu'min who has managed to attain those aspects pertaining to iman, namely purification of aqa'id, but the

radiance (nuraniyat) that was supposed to come into his heart from the process of purification, has not come into him. This nuraniyat will not appear until the corrupt akhlaq is not removed and replaced with a good akhlaq. The corrupt aqa'id may have gone, but the purity and the nuraniyat that were supposed to have entered, have not entered as yet.

Take this illustration: Your clothes have become dirty. You wash off the filth, what was ghabith, but see whether the necessary lustre has been achieved or not. Should not lustre also be present? If it is not present, should you not have used the correct method for the cleansing process? Definitely, this should have been done.

So, the corrupt aqa'id having gone, there should also be goodness that should have appeared. Just as the physical body requires good nutrition, in a like manner ruhani nutrition also needs to be good (tayyib). Just as the corrupt aqa'id have been removed, with it remove also the corrupt akhlaq – make its tazkiyah. Then combine this tazkiyah of the akhlaq with the tazkiyah of the aqa'id. The former is related to the batin and the latter is also related to the batin. In this way both batini forces have been combined.

What is the first point with regard to attaining success? It is tazkiyah. In other words, it is to remove corrupt aqa'id and to remove a corrupt akhlaq – so that nur can enter the heart and this nur can reach perfection, resulting in nur upon nur. You yourselves speak about "Nurun-ala-nur." Tayyib iman has entered and a tayyib akhlaq has also entered. When these two good qualities combine, then the result becomes "super-good".

The first point was tazkiyah. Do you understand what tazkiyah is? Yes?

We now come to the second point:

Allah Ta'ala is now saying, "Do not sit back complacent at this." Those qualities which I have explained are connected to the heart, in regard to them Allah Ta'ala is saying, "Do not sit back complacent at having attained these. Adopt those methods that will see to the preservation and continuation of them." These qualities have come into existence. They were non-existent. Now, they are in existence. The corrupt aqa'id have gone. The qualities of a corrupt akhlaq have gone. In opposition to these, other qualities have come into existence. Now comes the question of maintaining these.

Maintaining youth and honouring parents

To attain something, though it may be difficult, is not as difficult as preserving and maintaining it. Or, do you think it is easy? Of course, it is difficult.

Take the onset of youth: The father and mother have worked very hard to earn and feed you. They ate afterwards – the parents feed the child first, the best that they can afford. The mother would say, "I will eat the leftovers. You go ahead and enjoy yourself."

My dear children! You have reached adolescence. Now you have to preserve and maintain that youth. Seeing adolescence has come into existence, do you think it is easy to preserve and maintain that adolescence? It is not easy! The challenge is to bring vitality to that youth. There are adolescents sitting here, or are you all old men? Most of you are adolescents. Safeguard that adolescence. Acknowledge the favours of your parents on you. They sweated blood and tears to earn and feed you. Now that you have attained adolescence, be grateful to them. Value them. Honour and respect them. Listen to them and obey them. Who can be more concerned

about your welfare than your mother and father? You do not love your own life as much as your mother and father do.

Just now I had stated that Allah Ta’ala states, “O mu’min! You do not love your life as much as I, also Mu’min, have love for your life.” Did I not mention this just now? So, Allah Ta’ala is the Rabbe-Haqiqi – the real and true Nourisher and Cherisher – whereas the father is the rabbe-majazi – the substitute nourisher and cherisher. It is written that he is the qiblah-darain – the qiblah of both the worlds. So, O Youth! You do not have as much love for your own life as much as your mother and father have love for your life. When you developed a small boil, you were inexperienced, while your mother and father were experienced. They knew what could happen. They sent you to consult the doctor. Treat it at its commencement. It should not happen that it worsens and you need to have a major operation. This is mentioned just incidentally.

I was saying that for something to come into existence may be difficult, but more difficult is the preservation and the maintenance of that item.

The second factor leading to success

So, Allah Ta’ala states the second factor:

وذكر اسم ربه

Take note that the word used is “Rabb” (Cherisher and Nourisher) and not “Ilah” (Deity).

To remind you, Allah Ta’ala had stated,

قد افلح من تزكى

That person has attained success who has attained purification – tazakka. Note that

here it does not state zakkaha, one who purifies himself, which was stated elsewhere.

However, do not be proud of that state of purification. Its preservation and maintenance are still necessary. Your Rabb is everywhere. Turn to Him. Supplicate unto Him, wa zakarasma rabbihi.

So, what is the second point? Make the zikr of your Rabb continuously. “Ism” means “name”. Take the name of your Rabb continuously. Not merely to take the name of your Rabb, but to take His name continuously. It is not a matter of taking His name today and then leaving it tomorrow, but to take His name all the time; to take the name of your Rabb continuously. That is why Allah Ta’ala and Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) have stated that your tongue should be kept moist with the zikr of Allah Ta’ala:

لا يزال لسانك رطبا من ذكر الله

Keep your tongue moist with the name of Allah Ta’ala.

In other words: continuously. La-yazalu means that it should not terminate. In other words: all the time.

O children, do you understand? Keep your tongues moist with the zikr, with the name of Allah Ta’ala. Do you take it that it means to sit for only half an hour or fifteen minutes in zikr? Not at all. That half an hour or fifteen minutes is training for continuous zikr, not merely for zikr for that period only.

Therefore, keep on making an assessment of that muraqabah and of that zikr which you have made for that short period. Ask yourself whether continuity has been achieved or not? Ask yourself, “When I stood up from my muraqabah and my zikr and I was going about with my duties, had that muraqabah still remained with me?

Was that zikr still continuing on my tongue, or was it only temporarily there while I sat?” You remembered whilst you were sitting in zikr but not afterwards. Assess yourself.

Do you understand?

You come and sit here and then go away. This is deception. You should take stock all the time. Take stock at every step and all the time. The meaning of zikr is yad, which is with the tongue and it is also in the heart. Allah Ta’ala has stated in the Qur’an Sharif:

فَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلٰى جُنُوبِكُمْ

Make the zikr of Allah Ta’ala while standing, while sitting and while reclining.

At another place Allah Ta’ala states:

وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

And glorify Him morning and evening. (S.33. A.42)

“Morning and evening” is a way of saying “all the time”.

So, Zate-Bari Ta’ala is saying the same thing and Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is also saying the same thing that Allah Ta’ala is saying, namely that the heart and the tongue should be kept moist all the time in the yad and with the name of Allah Ta’ala.

We have thus dealt with the second aspect of attaining success. By success we refer to perfect success. In any activity, a temporary success has no credence. Take this illustration: A person invests 100,000 Rupees in a venture and he gets back 150,000 Rupees. If this profit accrues every time then there is credibility that the venture is profitable. If, on the other hand, there is a return of 150,000 Rupees on the one day and the next day the whole amount is lost, can one say that the venture

is profitable? Of course not. Therefore, understand what the objective is. If the objective has been attained, success has been attained.

So, in our context, what is success? Here we are speaking about permanent success – attaining complete and perfect success. To attain this, Allah Ta'ala has stated that three things are required.

To recapitulate: The first factor had two components: for corrupt aqa'id to be removed and be replaced by sound aqa'id; and for a corrupt akhlaq to be removed and be replaced by a good akhlaq, which is connected with the internal, the batin, the heart, and not with the organs and parts of the body. These have been discussed in some detail.

The second factor is waz karasma rabbihi. Its connection is also with the batin. However, from one aspect this is connected to the external also: the tongue is part of the body, even though it is not openly so like the nose or the hands, which are quite visible externally. The tongue is not visible ordinarily. Only when the mouth is open will madam tongue be visible. Otherwise, she is in purdah (concealed), inside the mouth. There are barriers in front, above and below. Beyond these barriers are protecting walls, these being the lips, one on top and one at the bottom. These walls have confined madam tongue in her house. What is this house of hers? It is the mouth. She is fearful of venturing from it because there are spikes in front – the teeth. She should proceed with caution. It should not happen that that she is impaled by these. The tongue does get bitten at times. She may be saved from being impaled but it should not happen that she is caught between the two walls in front – the lips –and she suffers discomfort. She has escaped being impaled but has not saved herself from being crushed.

Do you understand?

The gender of the tongue (zaban) – is it masculine or feminine? Seeing that the tongue has been said to be feminine in gender and is kept in such purdah, for that entity that is completely feminine – that is, womenfolk – to be in the house and to stay in the house would be even more applicable (bi-tariqe ula). Is that not so? Should she venture out of her house, would she not be impaled also, that her honour is impaled and she suffers disgrace?

When the tongue, which is feminine in gender, is kept in its house, then this is a nazir (appropriateness/ resemblance), so that which is completely feminine, meaning women, should be restricted to the house even to a greater degree (bi-tariqe ula). She should stay in the house and not be allowed out because, should her feet move out of the house today, then you will not find her at home again.

Wisdom from a villager

I am reminded of something. Some time back there were no busses and such types of transport. Traveling was by means of oxcart. I had to go to a place called Charthawal. The oxcart came to fetch us. With me was a Molwisahib, Mawlana Sayyid Abid Husain sahib, marhum, who was popularly known as Chote Molwisahib. So, both of us proceeded to Charthawal. On the way we had to pass a place called Lohari. As we were passing this place, the driver of the oxcart stopped and said, "Hadhratji, I have not puffed on a huqqah since early this morning. If I have your permission, may I go and smoke one now? I'll just draw two puffs and I'll be back." There was an old man sitting some distance away pulling on a huqqah. I replied, "Yes, yes. Go ahead and have a couple of puffs." He went.

There was a considerable delay in his returning. When he returned I said, "Bhai, how come it took you so long to pull only two puffs?" He replied, "Hadhratji, the reason it took so long is that husband and wife were fighting with one another. Both the husband and wife are old and they were quarreling with one another. The one said something then the other said something. The poor husband spoke very little but the wife had a lot to say." I said to him, "Ofo! The woman had much more to say?" He responded, "Yes, Hadhratji! This is something you should ask us about! What is there to ask? Well, the nature of a woman is such. The nature of a woman is such that the moment her foot leaves the house then, Hadhratji, you will not find her at home any more." This is what the villager was telling me that the nature of women is such that the moment they step out of the house you will not find them at home any more.

The villager had a well-balanced mind. He understood the feminine species very well. He understood women very well. He was uttering the same sentiments that Zate-Bari Ta'ala has stated. The villager had a simple mind, uncorrupted. He drew a straightforward drawing.

So, you can see that Allah Ta'ala has drawn a resemblance between the tongue and women. When you mention "zaban", you will use the feminine gender, making it definitely female.

The tongue is zahir (external) in one aspect and it is batin (internal) in another aspect. Similarly, zikre-lisani (zikr made verbally) is also zahir (external) from one aspect and it is batin (internal) from another aspect, that is, remembrance in the heart.

"Wazakrasma-rabbihi" – "ism" means "name". Thus we have the following:

الله، الله، لا إلـــه إلا الله، ســـبحان الله، سبحان الله، الحمـــد لله، الحمد لله، الله أكـــبر

الله أكـــبر، ســـبحان الله وبحمـــده ســـبحان الله العظيـــم

and so forth.

Is this not taking the name of your Rabb? So, what is the second thing? It is to take the name of your Rabb all the time, continuously. Just like the aqa'id batini was for all times and not for a short while only – corrupt aqa'id and akhlaq have to be removed until death – in exactly the same way one has to make zikr of one's Rabb continuously, and not just for a temporary time period.

O my brothers! O seekers of self-purification (talibane-tazkiyah)! O my honoured muhajirin – you have left your homes to come here, therefore muhajirin! O talibane-suluk mujahidin! Have you understood the issues discussed?

Now, take the situation where there is zikr made with the tongue, but there is no dhiyan, yad, thought or picturing of Allah Ta'ala in the heart, then too this will be considered to be zikr lisani. On the other hand, there is zikr qalbi – there is zikr in the heart – but there is no zikr with the tongue, from one aspect there is zikr but one can be deceived. In this situation, seeing that the tongue does not move in zikr, the tongue being a physical item capable of movement, whereas the thought of Allah Ta'ala in the heart is not something that has substance, it being metaphysical, one can be deceived at times. One may think that there is yad in the heart when, in actual fact, there is no yad in the heart.

Therefore, seeing that this zikr in the heart is intangible, together with zikr qalbi, together with the yad and the dhiyan, one should also make zikr with the tongue, whose movement is physical and tangible. When, at any time, through some worldly need, one has to engage in speech, at that time the zikr of Allah Ta'ala is

not directly with the tongue, but the zikr of Allah Ta'ala is by virtue of zikre-qalbi through muraqabah. This will happen because of having previously practised on this.

Do you understand?

So, continuous zikre-qalbi and zikre-lisani are objectives to attain. We have now dealt with the second aspect of attaining success. Success is an objective with every individual. The success that is meant is everlasting success and not temporary success. It is success in relation to the Akhirat and not worldly success. This is to be kept in mind very well that permanent success is an objective, and that success is related to the Akhirat.

The third item – salat

We now come to the third aspect: "Fasalla." That is, keep on performing namaz.

وذكر اسم ربه فصلى

Kindly note that it is not "Thumma salla" but it is "Fasalla." There is a difference grammatically. It means not just to follow-up with namaz but it means to perform namaz on an ongoing basis.

I am speaking to the children here who are students of Din. I am also a talibe-'ilm. Namaz falls into different categories. Some namazes are at the level of fardh; some are at the level of wajib; and some are at the level of mustahab, which we refer to as nafl. As for the namazes that are nafl, there is no time specified for them, except that they should not be performed at the rising of the sun, at noon exactly, at the setting of the sun, after Fajr and after Asr. It is forbidden to perform nafl at these five times. Besides these five times, there is no specified time for nafl. In other

words, perform nafl whenever your heart desires to do so, provided that there is no harm to your necessary worldly affairs and, as far as your necessary Dini tasks are concerned, those that take priority in that it is compulsory (wajib) to carry them out, that there is no interference in performing them. Nafl may be performed at all times.

Basically, namaz is performed by bodily means. One stands on one's feet; one's hands are utilised; the body bends forward in ruku' and then straightens itself; one sits down; and the eyes do not wander here and there, or do they? So, there is zikr in the performance of the arkan (different postures) of the body and its various parts, with the proper sequence of movements.

Before the namaz, healthy aqa'id were mentioned, and also a good akhlaq, and then the zikr of your Rabb, and all these are to found in salat. In namaz we find that correct aqa'id and a good akhlaq are combined. With both these, the salat is now comprehensive. This namaz is also continuous. It is not such that one performs it the one day and discards it the next; that one performs it for one waqt and one does not perform it at the next waqt.

One other point: The continuity of the performance of any action varies. If I were to ask you, "Sir, did you perform your Eid namaz?" What will you reply? Is your answer, "Sometimes,"? No. You will say, "Always." If I were then to ask you, "Did you read it yesterday? Did you read it today?" The answer is, "Of course not!" Seeing that you have not performed Eid namaz yesterday and today, how can it be said that you perform it always? It is obvious that "continuous" is different for every task.

Namaz is also to be continuous. It appears in the Hadith Sharif:

انتظار الصلاة صلاة

It is termed “murabitah”. In other words: To be in anticipation of namaz is also in the order (hukman) of being in namaz.

The same thing has been written in the tafsir by Allamah Baidhawi (RA)

Take this example: After you performed your Fajr namaz you became involved in your necessary worldly activities, for which there is permission and rukhsat. However, every moment you have this concern, “It must not happen that I get so involved in this work that I miss out on Zuhr namaz, that I miss out on performing it with jama’at.” One assumes that you are in the position where it is incumbent on you to perform your namaz with jama’at. You may be a farmer busy ploughing the land; you may be working in your shop; or you may be an employee in an office; but the thought of Zuhr namaz is in front of you all the time. As such, you are in salat all the time – “Intizaro salat, salat.” This explains the concept of being in salat all the time

When the salat is performed in this comprehensive manner, with jama’at (where applicable), with aqa’id being corrected, with akhlaq being corrected, with the correct zikre-lisani and zikre-qalbi, then Zate-Bari Ta’ala focuses His attention towards this musalli with His special bounty. The reason is that at that particular moment the person performing his namaz has incorporated both factors necessary for success into his namaz. He has attained completeness. Thus, the special gaze of bounty is directed at him from Zate-Bari Ta’ala’s side. Is the special bounteous gaze of Zate-Bari Ta’ala not something one should desire? That special bounteous gaze is focused especially in the state of salat. So, is salat something to be discarded, seeing that it is the means of attaining the special bounteous gaze of

Zate-Bari Ta’ala?

Shall I present the proof of this? The reason I ask is that I fear very much the muftis of these days. I am even more scared of the general populace. Also, I am even more scared of western educated individuals.

Me’raj

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) went on the journey of Me’raj, which was a means of an increase in the progress of his Nabuwat, an increase in his progress of Risalat, and the method of an increase in his elevation of his Nabuwat. “Me’raj” is a derivative of “uruj” – instrumental in elevation. This uruj is termed progress. Nabuwat in itself denotes progress. There is no greater status or position than it. Then, too, there is progress in it by means of Me’raj.

Do you understand this point?

As for that individual who is neither a Nabi nor a Sahabi, he should, even to a higher degree, desire to progress. Is there no need to progress? Of course, there is. So, ponder over it. It is for this reason that Allah Ta’ala has said that salat is Me’raj: As-salatu Me’rajul-mu’minin. It is a gift presented. I will not go into that now.

To continue: Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is on the journey of Me’raj. Hadhrat Jibra’il (AS) is accompanying him. They journey across the seven heavens. They finally reach the place called Sidratul-muntaha. Hadhrat Jibra’il (AS) stopped here and said, “I am not worthy or capable of proceeding farther with you. I could only accompany you up to this point. Now the affair is between you and Allah Ta’ala.”

Let me place an illustration in front of you: I cannot say whether this still takes place in the families of the nobility and the important people. It is possible that it still happens. In any case, it is the day of the wedding. The groom's nikah has taken place and he has brought his wife home. The womenfolk receive the bride with great excitement, fussing over her. There is no way that the groom can enter the house. He is left out in the cold and has to kick his heels around. Night falls. One by one the womenfolk go back to their own homes. The household folk also prepare to go to their own quarters to go and sleep. The house is empty and the poor groom is left stranded. He has not been told what the arrangements are and which room has been prepared for him in the palatial house.

However, the mama, the servant – she is the in-between – comes to his rescue. She knows in which room the bride has been settled. How could the menfolk know? The groom's father knows nothing either! The groom's mother knows but she feels too shy to direct her son. So, the mama, the servant goes to the groom and says, "Mia! Come with me. The bride is awaiting. Come." She proceeds and he tags along. She reaches the room where the bride is and stands at the door of the closed room. She addresses the groom, "It was my duty to bring you this far. I cannot proceed farther." She knew that the groom himself will take her to task were she to go in with him. How could she go farther? So, she herself is saying, "I may not step farther. Now, the affair is between you and your wife."

To continue: Having reached Sidratul-muntaha, Hadhrat Jibra'il (AS) could not proceed farther and he returned, leaving Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) in seclusion with Allah Ta'ala. When Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) tried to step forward, Allah Ta'ala commanded him to stop: Allah Ta'ala was in

salat! This is stated in “Nashrut-Tib” – you may refer to it.

People are amazed and confused when they read this. “How can Allah Ta’ala be in namaz? What does this Hadith Sharif mean?” The meaning of it is that Zate-Bari Ta’ala was directing His special attention on Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) in order that he could be equipped to speak to Allah Ta’ala and for His visualisation (didar /ru’namai).

Do you understand the point made?

There is a Farsi couplet, mentioned to you previously, where a questioner asks, “What is the Qur’ane-Pak?” The person replying said that Zate-Bari Ta’ala knew how much muhabbat the mu’min has for Him, and that the mu’min would want to see Him. Therefore, Allah Ta’ala revealed His Kalame-Pak for the mu’min to visualise Him. Zate-Bari Ta’ala sent the Qur’an Sharif to the people for them to visualise their Nourisher and Cherisher. How great is not His bounty! As one who is in love will say, “If I cannot see you, hearing your voice will suffice.”

So, when Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) wanted to step forward, Zate-Bari Ta’ala commanded him to wait – He was in salat. The One Whom Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was proceeding to see, was in salat. In other words, He was focusing His special attention on Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) in order that he may proceed with ease, that there may be greater capability and accommodation for the visualisation of Allah Ta’ala. “Allah Ta’ala is in salat” in this context means that His special attention is being focused.

So, this salat of ours – this namaz of ours – was presented as a gift on the occasion of Me’raj. This is a special focusing from Zate-Bari Ta’ala on the one performing namaz. The one performing namaz, from his side, is focusing his special attention

towards Allah Ta'ala from his heart (qalbi):

ان تعبد الله كانك تراه فان لم تكن تراه فانه يراك

Worship Allah as if you are seeing Him (because) even though you may not be able to see Him, He is seeing you.

Do you understand?

So far we have understood the following: Namaz has now become all-encompassing. Also, to be in anticipation of the next namaz after performing the one namaz, is like being in namaz. In other words, namaz is now virtually continuous. So, correct aqa'id, a good akhlaq and zikr are on a continuous basis, in the same way salat has also become continuous. Therefore, at no moment in time is one free of correct aqa'id, free of a praiseworthy akhlaq, free of the zikr of one's Rabb and free of namaz. Continuity in all these three is the objective.

It is only through the fadhl and karam of Allah Ta'ala, the barkat of my Hadhratwala (may Allah Ta'ala fill his qabr with nur) and the mediation (tufail) of all of you that Zate-Bari Ta'ala is causing me to speak in this manner. Have those of you who are resident here, ever heard it in this manner that Zate-Bari Ta'ala is causing me to explain to you? This is no achievement on my part.

By attributing any good to oneself, ujub (conceit) will enter and takabbur (arrogance) will be evidenced. As I mentioned previously, how can one have ujub? How can one show takabbur? How can one attribute this good amal to oneself? Is there no danger of it being snatched away? A mu'min may make mistakes but he is also repentant. So, how can this sinner look with contempt at another sinner? How can one gaze at oneself with self-admiration and self-importance?

Fana – Annihilation / Non-existence

To continue: All the three items discussed will lead to complete success. The comprehensive form of all three items of success will be termed “fana’”. This is the goal. Then, how can there be ujub and how can there be takabbur?

We should take a lesson from the glow-worm, the fire-fly. At night one sees the glow-worms as little lights. When we were small we used to see the lighted glow-worms in the open and catch them. Having captured them, we used to place them in our topis and then wear the topis. Now the topis appeared lit up.

Anyhow, somebody asked the glow-worm, “Arè yar! Where do you reside the whole day? You are visible at night but you are not to be seen during daytime.” The glow-worm replied, “I stay here day and night. Where else is there to stay except in this wilderness? However, in the presence of the sun I am such as if I have no existence.”

Sheikh Sadi (RA) states, “O insan mu’min! Your noble state should also be like that. Take a lesson from the glow-worm, which is saying, ‘I may be glittering but what can I do? When the sun makes its appearance it is as if I was not born at all.’”

O mu’min! Similarly, you have definitely been created but the awe and majesty of Zate-Bari Ta’ala should be so firmly embedded in your heart that you should be non-existent in front of Him. The technical term for this state is “fana”.

Fana and wahdatul-wujud

Now, in each and every task the mu’min bandah adopts this approach of fana’. You may argue and say, “How can this be fana’ (non-existence), because when he is lying down his feet are spread out. When he went to sit his legs were taking him

to his seat. When he is talking his tongue is in motion. When he is handing something over or when he is taking something into his hands, his hands are moving. Can this be non-existence (fana')? These motions are proof of existence (baqa')."

Not at all! Not at all! This baqa' of his has been attained by means of fana'. The end result is this baqa'. All these movements are carried out subservient to the orders of Zate-Bari Ta'ala. These motions are executing His orders. These are not deviating from His orders. When there is no deviation from His orders, then there is obedience and execution of His orders. This then is that very fana' that he has discarded his own desires. He has abandoned his physical desires. And whatever desires he is fulfilling are done subservient to the orders of Allah Ta'ala. Thus his every tranquil state and every motion are in the ambience of fana'.

Summary of the majlis

Thus, the rank (maqam) of the mu'min is that of maqame-fana'. This has been explained in shari'at terms as:

قد افلح من زكيها

قد افلح من تزكى

وذكر اسم ربه فصلى

He has reached the point of success – success has been attained to a full degree – by that person who has these three qualities in him: he has correct aqa'id (i.e. he has purified himself of corrupt aqa'id) and he has embellished himself with a good akhlaq (i.e. he has purified himself of a corrupt akhlaq and it has become part of his nature); he is taking the name of his Rabb continuously; and he is engaged in

performing namaz punctually and regularly. This person has attained success. With the taufiq of Allah Ta'ala, with the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of my Hadhrat (RA), I have expounded, with some detail, the following: Everyone is desirous of success. And by success is meant complete and perfect success, that is, success which is permanent. Zate-Bari Ta'ala has laid down the method in the three things stated above, that insan should be firm on these on a continuous basis till the time of death.

Du'a

May Allah Ta'ala give us the taufiq for us to keep firm on these three items until death.

Aamin

Khuda hafiz